

Thurber's MEN, WOMEN AND DOGS



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MEN, WOMEN AND DOGS

Thurber's MEN, WOMEN AND DOGS



A BOOK OF DRAWINGS

WITH A PREFACE BY *Dorothy Parker*

BANTAM



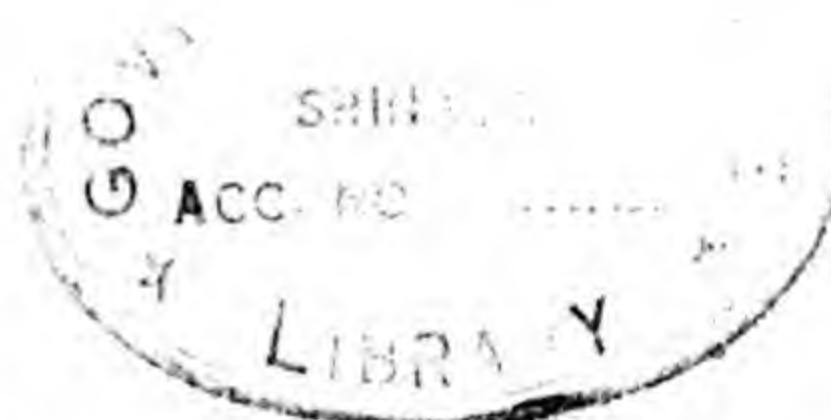
BOOKS

NEW YORK

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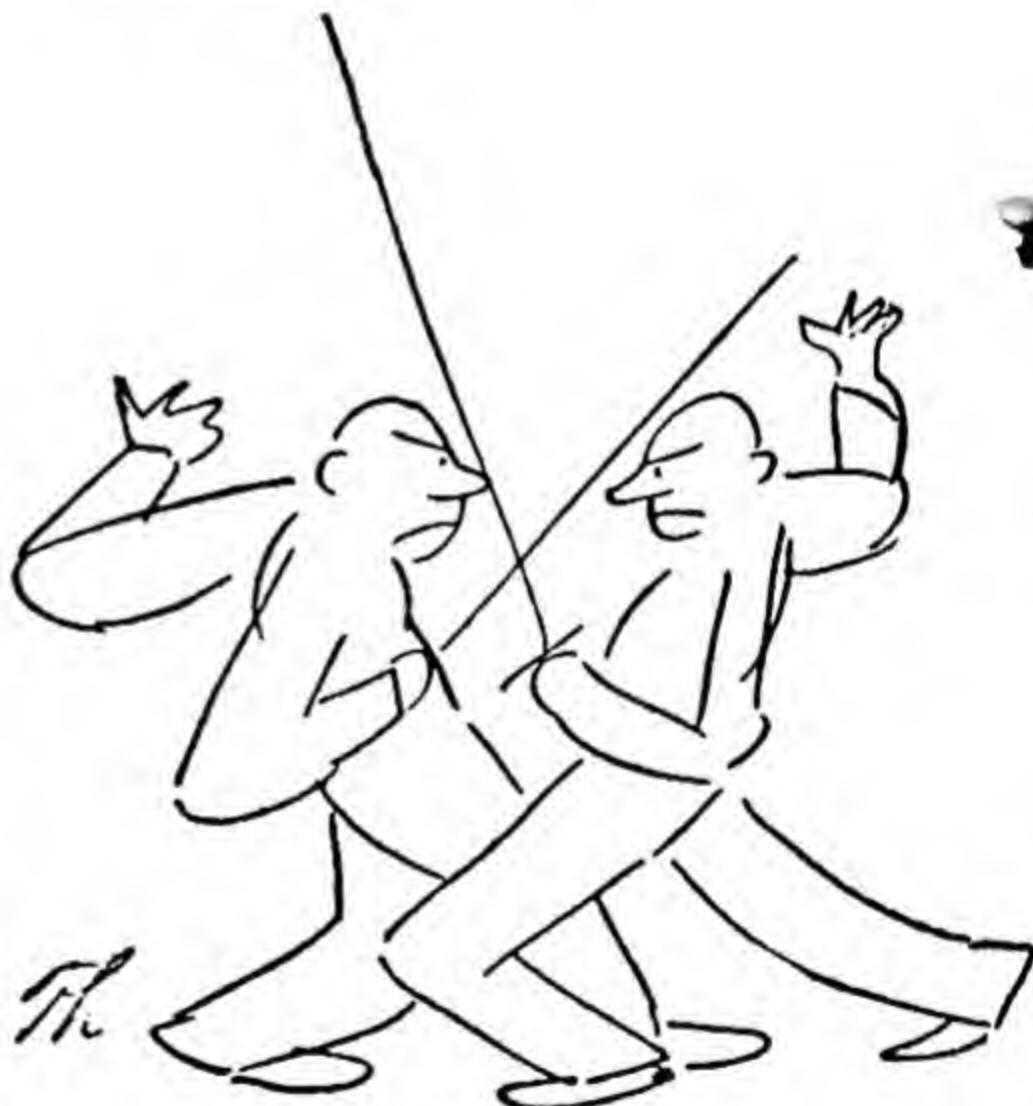
TO ANDY WHITE

who picked up the first of these restless scrawls
from the floor fifteen years ago and bravely set
about the considerable task of getting them pub-
lished, this book is gratefully and affectionately
dedicated



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

All the captioned drawings published in this book were first printed in *The New Yorker*. Most of the spots also appeared in the same magazine, with the exception of a few drawn especially for this book by James Thurber.

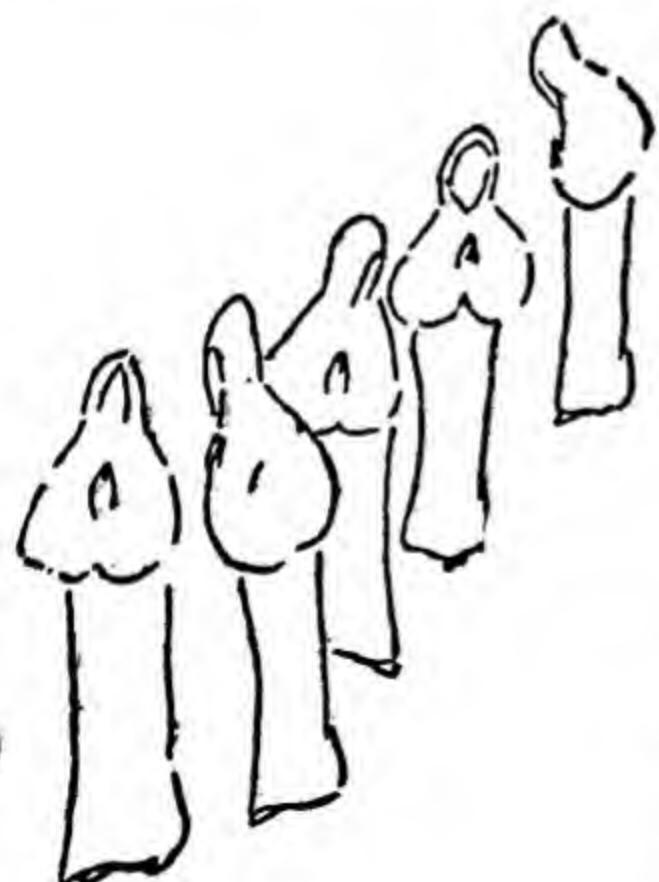


Preface

I had long ago made my design for what was to become of me when the Reaper had swung his scythe through my neck. I was to be cremated after death—at least, I always trusted it

would be after death. I even left instructions to this effect in my will, a document that might otherwise have been writ in a large, schoolgirl backhand on the head of a pin. Now, with the publication of this book, I must change those words, and with them my plans for the long, long

rest. Now I want to be left as approximately is, so I may be buried in a prominent place on a travelled thoroughfare through a wildly popular cemetery. Above me I want a big white stone—you will see why it must be big—on which I want carven in clear letters: "Uncover before this dust, for when it was a woman, it was doubly honored. Twice in life, it was given to her below to



introduce the work of James Thurber. Reader, who around here, including you, can tie that record?"

I like to think of my shining tombstone. It gives me, as you might say, something to live for.

It gives me, also, a lovely diversion with which to while away eternity. I have always found it best to be quiet and alone with a Thurber drawing, that I may seek to fathom what went on in the lives of the characters depicted, before the artist chose his moment for setting them down forever. Sometimes I wonder if eternity is going to be half long enough for me to make anything near a reasonable guess.

Consider, for instance, the picture showing a man, his wife, and a male guest. They are standing in a something less than gracious enclosure, furnished mainly with a bookcase apparently ordered by mail from the company that did such notable work in Pisa. And on top of the bookcase is a woman on all fours. So help me God, there is a woman on all fours on top of the bookcase. And the host is saying, "That's my first wife up there, and this is the *present* Mrs. Harris."

Well, what would you do about that? I worked for a while on the theory that the first Mrs. Harris, the one on top of the bookcase, was dead and stuffed, but my heart was never really in it. In the first place, she doesn't look stuffed; she looks limp. She looks limp and resigned and only a trifle bewildered. She has the look of having been where she is for a long time. How do they feed her? Do they put a cover over her at night? And what made her husband dispose of her and take his present mate? The new spouse is no more sweetly shaped, no more elegantly clothed, no more carefully coiffed than the old one. They look equally terrible. Could it be that the first wife had a habit of crouching on top of bookcases, and one day he

could stand it no longer and said, "Oh, all right, if *that's* what you want to do," and flung out and got married again? What does the new wife, that *present* Mrs. Harris, think of the arrangement? She looks not too sensitive, luckily for her, but she must know, when her friends come in for bridge, that her household is not overly conventional. And the bookcase is full of books. What books, in heaven's name, what books do such people read?

You understand what I mean when I say that eternity will not be long enough for my figuring?

Or take again, for instance, the fine drawing of the court scene—the mild judge, the cocksure lawyer, and the aghast witness. "Perhaps *this* will refresh your memory," the lawyer is saying in his nasty way, as he produces, no doubt with a flourish, a kangaroo—a tender, young, innocent, wistful kangaroo. What, I ask you, what can lie back of that?

I give up such things; or at least I say I do. But I find I keep on working at them through the white nights.

I cannot say that James Thurber's work has progressed. No more could I say that the new moon is more exquisite than the last one. I will not be so illiterate as to expand the perfect into the more perfect.

But I do say I see certain changes in his characters. The men seem to me, in the main, a little smaller, even a little more innocent, even a little more willing to please than before. Also, the *pince nez*, superbly done by a slanted line across the nose, seems to be more widely worn by them. It is to be hoped they do not turn to glasses to obtain a better view of their women. Because the ladies are increasingly awful. They get worse and worse, as we sit here. And there they are behaving, with never a moment's doubt, like *femmes fatales*.

It is hard for me to comment on *The War Between Men and Women*, for naturally I am partisan because of my sex. It is tough going for me to see the women in retreat, routed; finally to witness the woman general, mounted on that curious horse, doubtless a spy, surrendering her baseball bat to the late enemy. I comforted myself with the fact that no man had equaled the strange wild daring of Mrs. Pritchard's Leap. Then I realized I needed no such comfort. For if you study this glorious battle sequence closely, you will realize that the women, rout or no rout, surrender or no surrender, are the real winners. I suppose I understand that we are licked only when I say I doubt if our victory is for the best.

Mr. Thurber's animals have not changed with his new work; they have just got more so. My heart used to grow soft at the sight of his dogs; now it turns completely liquid. I give you, for the third time in instance, that darling who looks cautiously out his door, curves his paw to the snow-storm, and turns his poor, bewildered head up to the spewing heavens. There is nowhere else existent an innocence like to that of Thurber animals. . . . Even that strange, square beast, beside which lie the neat hat, the cold pipe, the empty shoe, and in front of which stands the stern woman, her hands on her hips, demanding, "What have you done with Dr. Mill-moss?" . . .

You see how easy it is to say "Thurber animals." The artist has gone into the language. How often we say, "He's a Thurber man" or "Look at that woman—she's a perfect Thurber," and, God help us and them, we are always understood. We need . . . no more about them. We have been taught to recognize them by the master. Possibly Thurber humans and animals existed before the artist drew them. I am willing to concede that they may have, but I

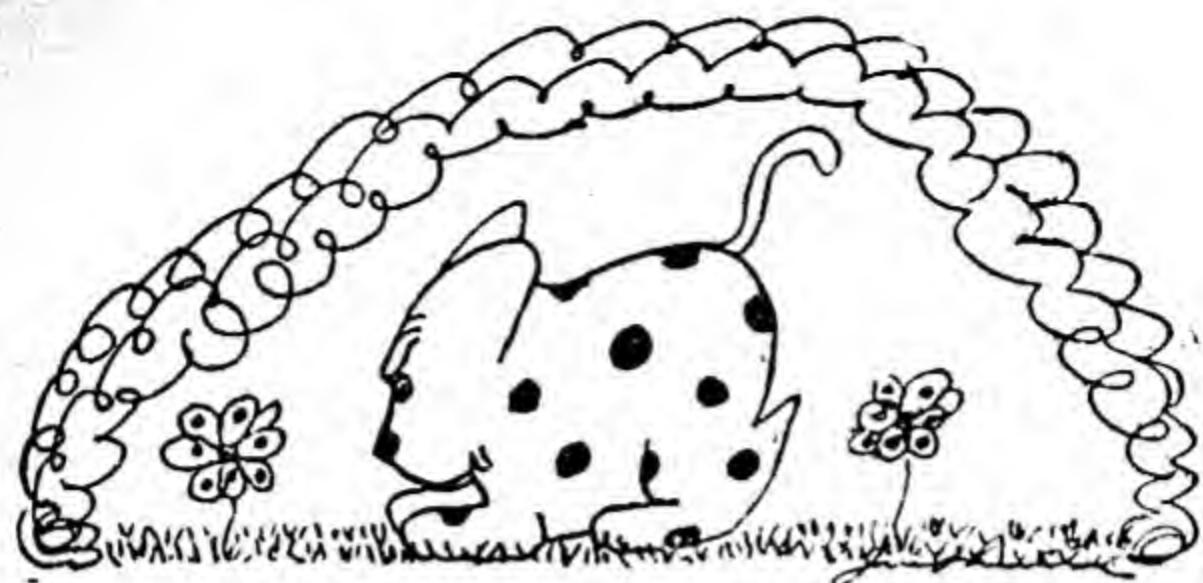
am strong to say that I doubt it. I believe that Nature again has been shown her place, and has gone into her old specialty of imitating art.

Two of my best friends are dogs of a whirling mélange of ancestry. They are short in the paw, long and wavering in the body, heavy and worried in the head. They are willing, useless, and irresistible. Nobody ever asks their breed. "Oh, look at the Thurber dogs," people say who see them for the first time. . . . If I were Mr. Thurber, I should rather have my name used that way even than have it bracketed, as it has so often been, with that of Matisse. . . .

I think you must know how I feel to be in the same book with a fine artist, to be standing here, this moment and forever, presenting his finest work. That is why I choke a little when I say, and with doubled privilege and doubled pride that I may say it again: Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. James Thurber.

DOROTHY PARKER

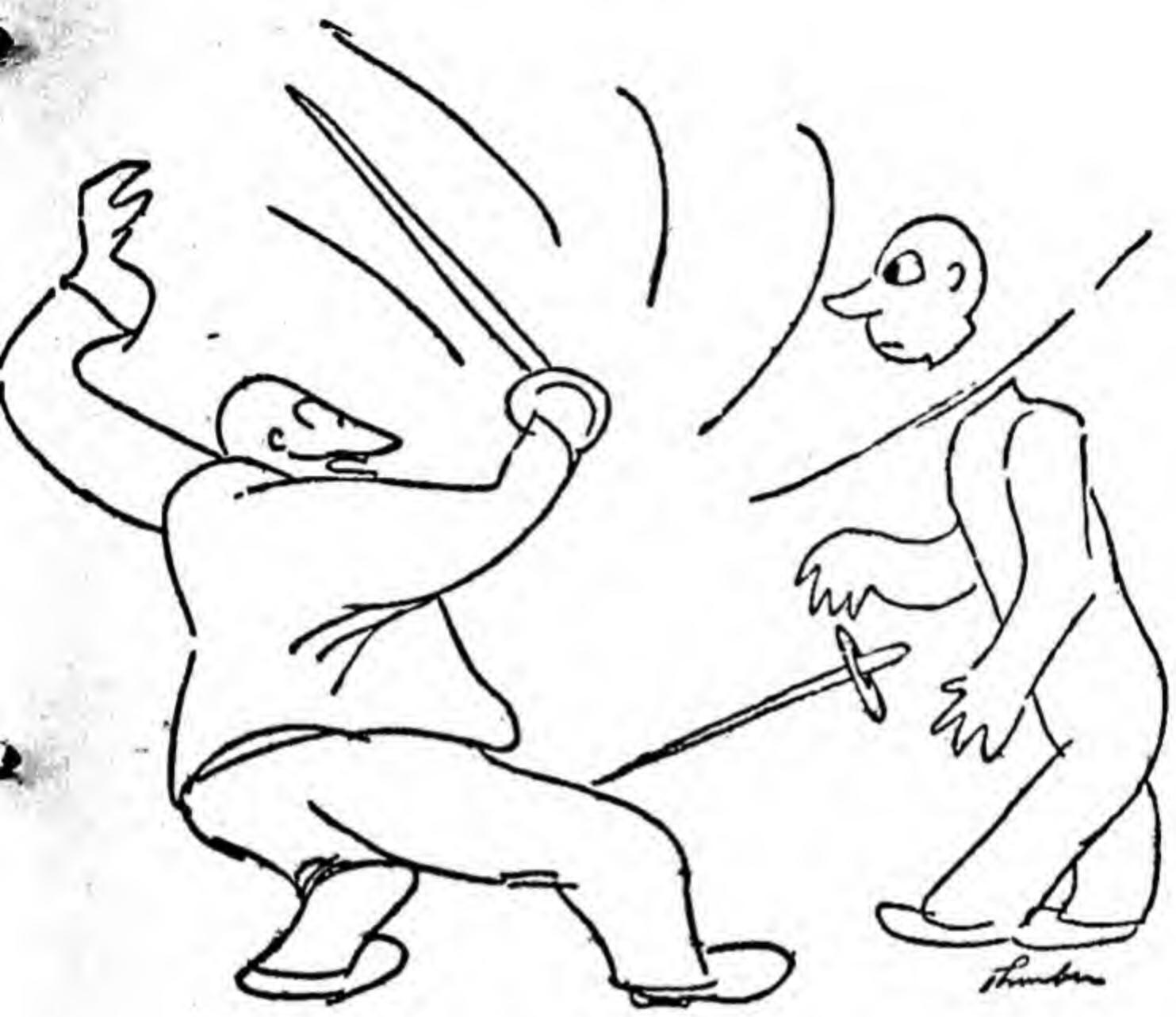
New York, 1943



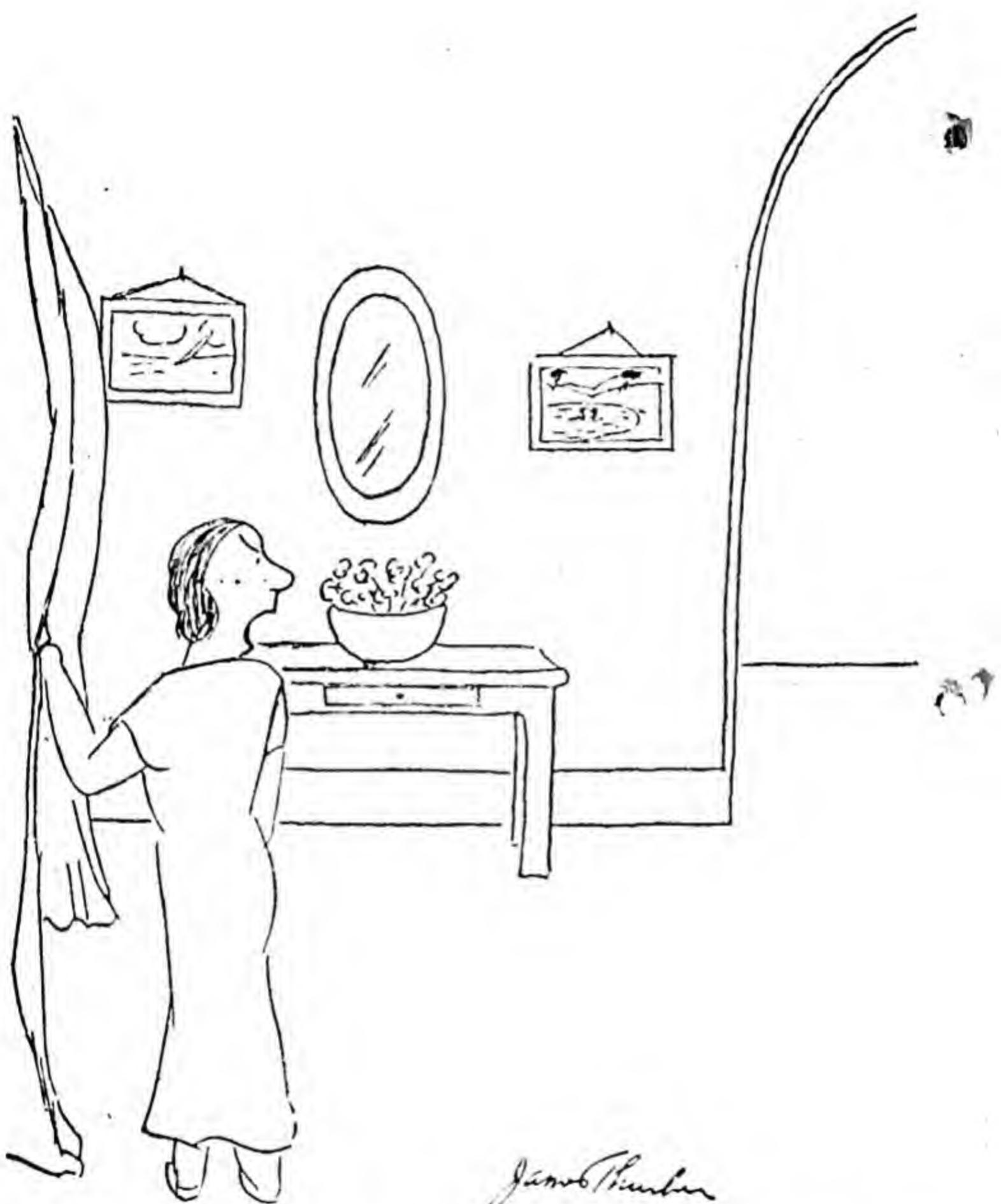
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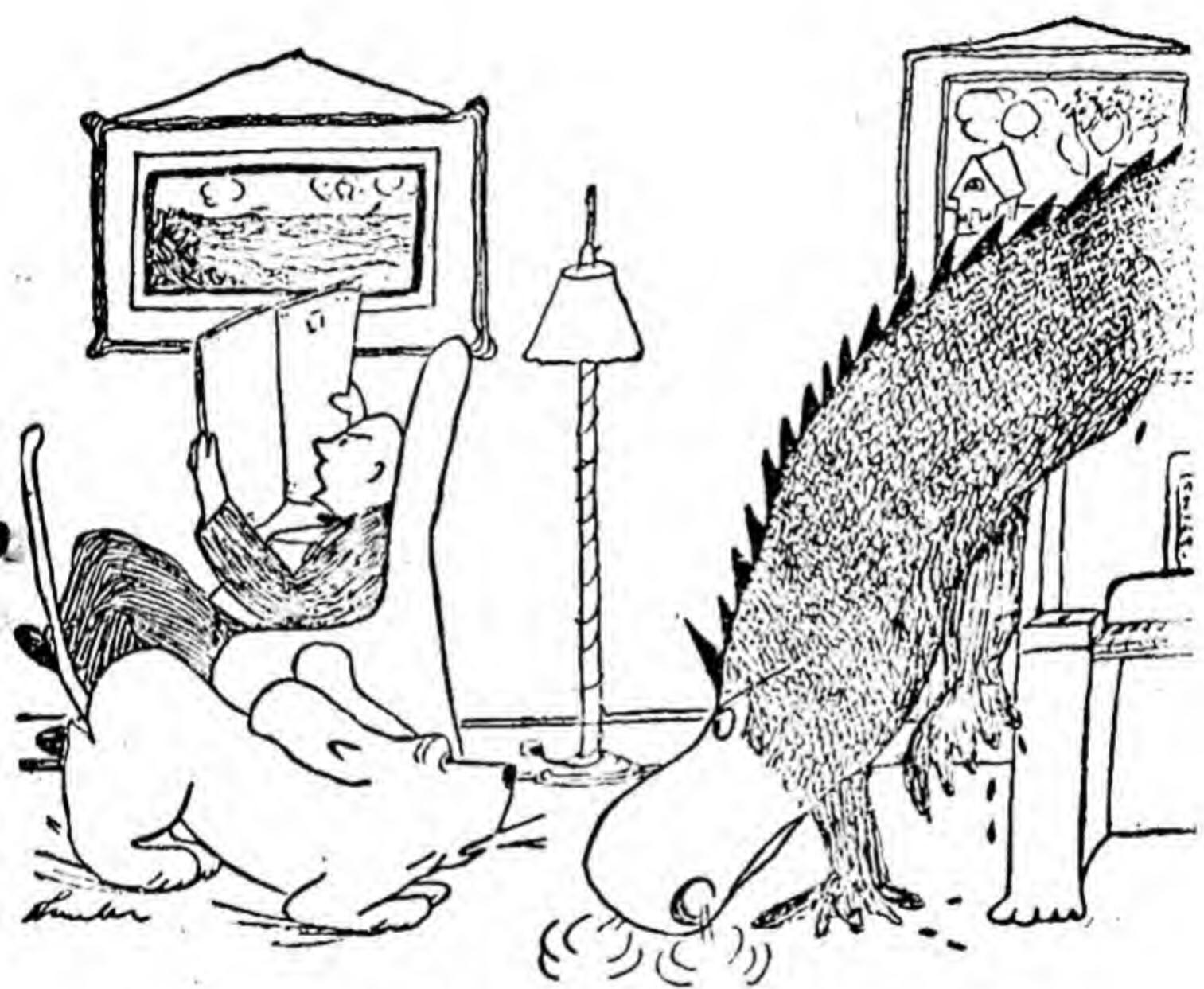


"Touché!"

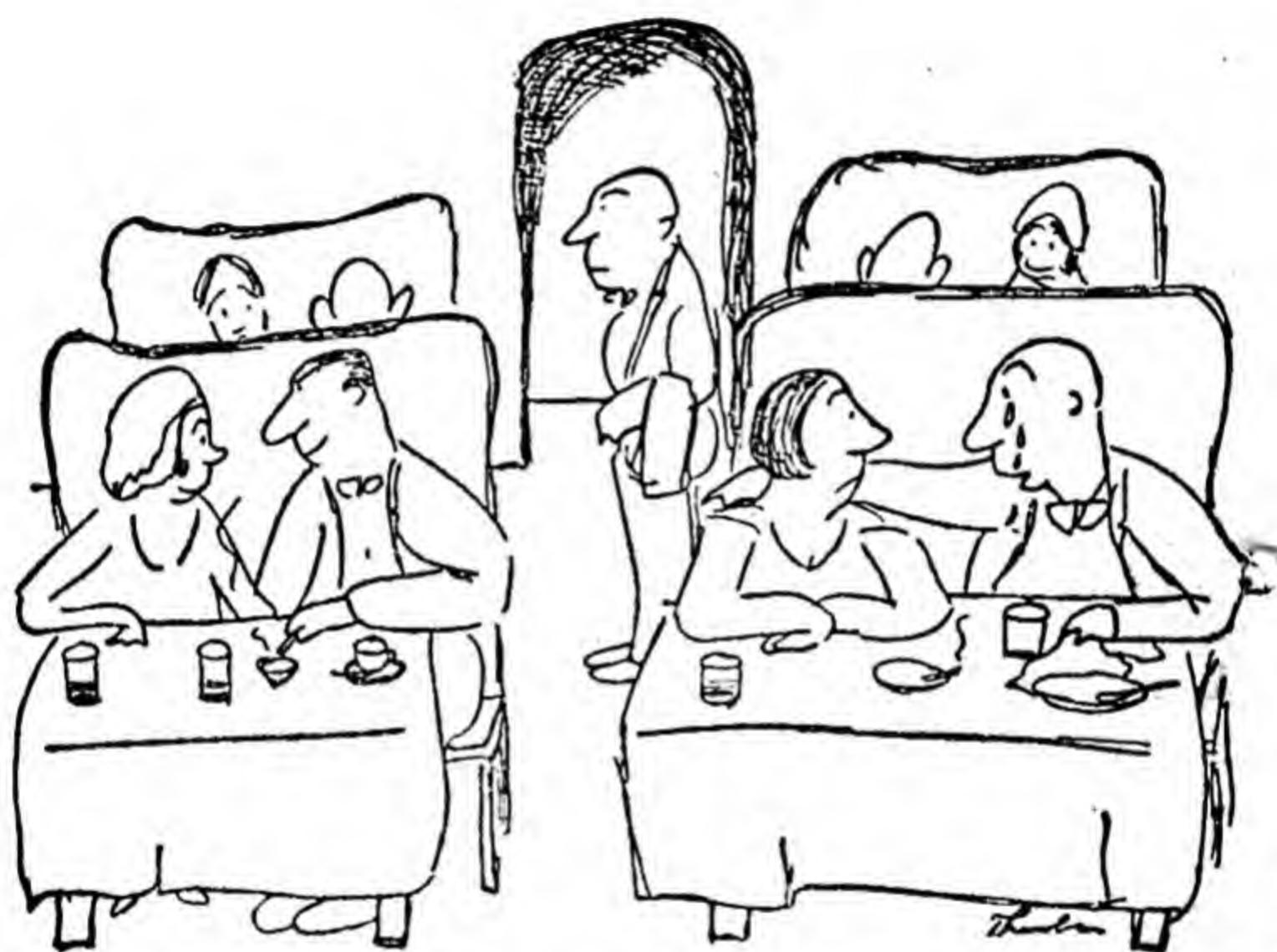


James Thurber

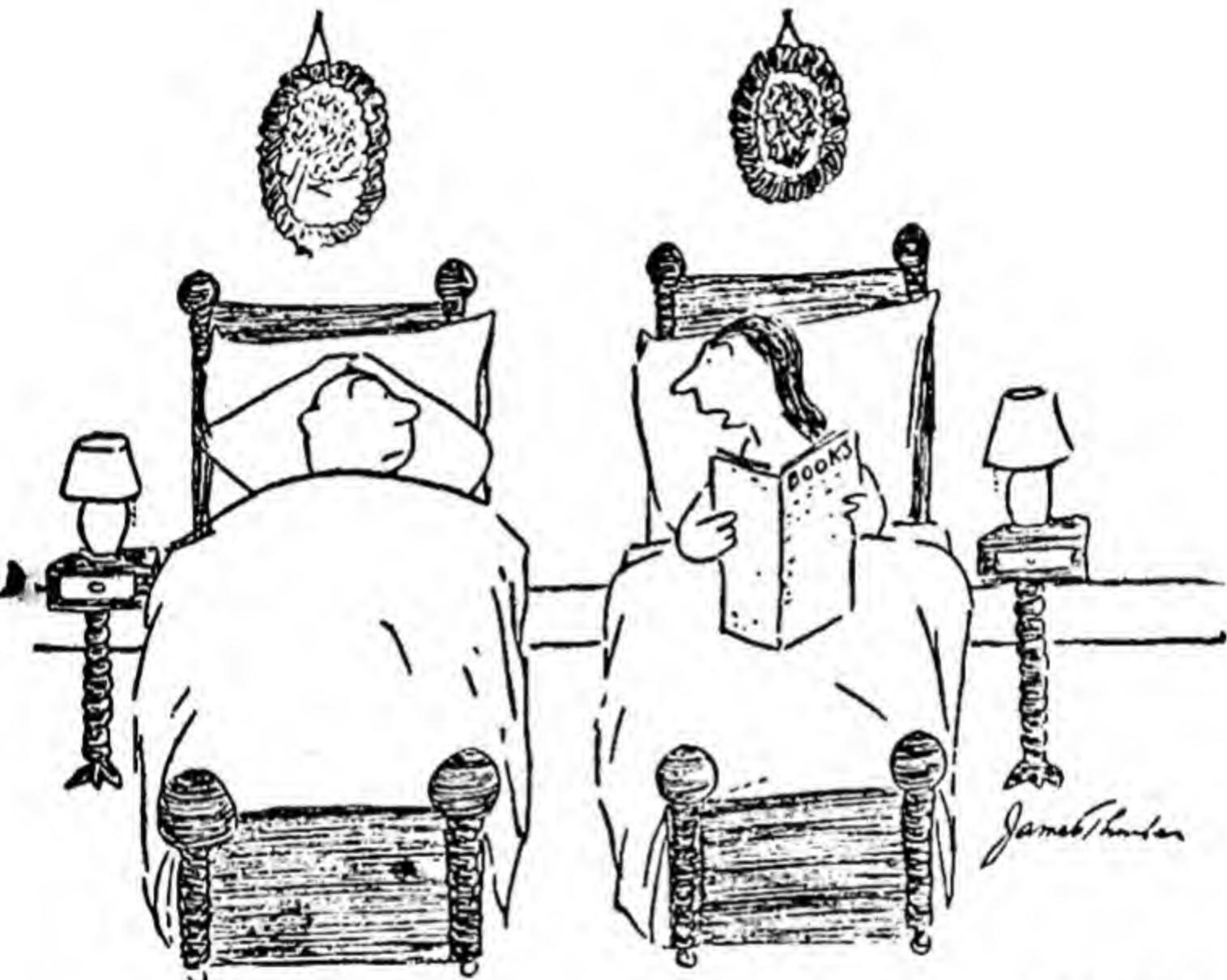
"Well, don't come and look at the rainbow then, you big ape!"



"Shut up, Prince! What's biting you?"



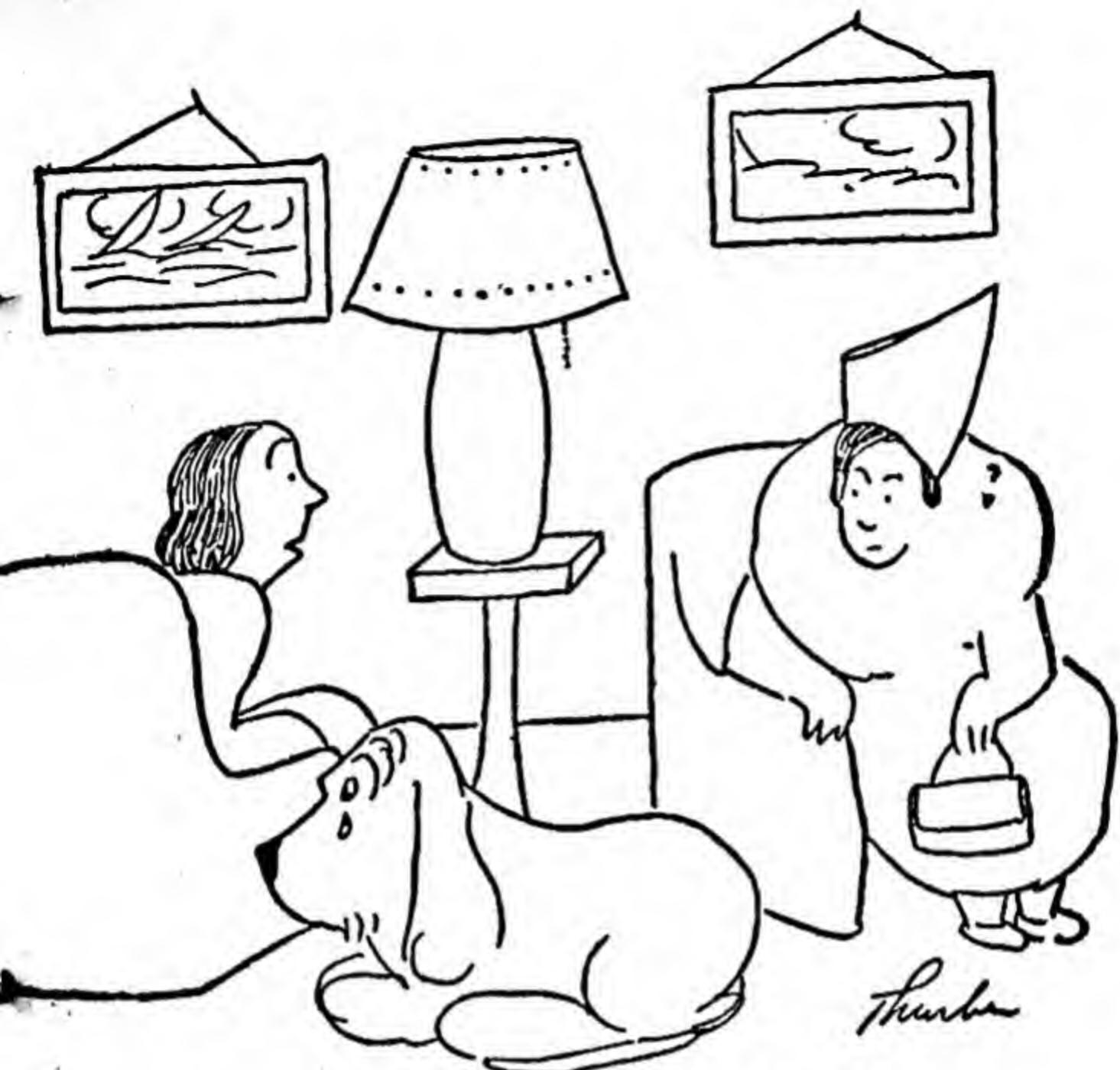
"My wife had me arrested one night last week."



"What the hell ever happened to the old-fashioned love story?"



"There's no use you trying to save *me*, my good man."

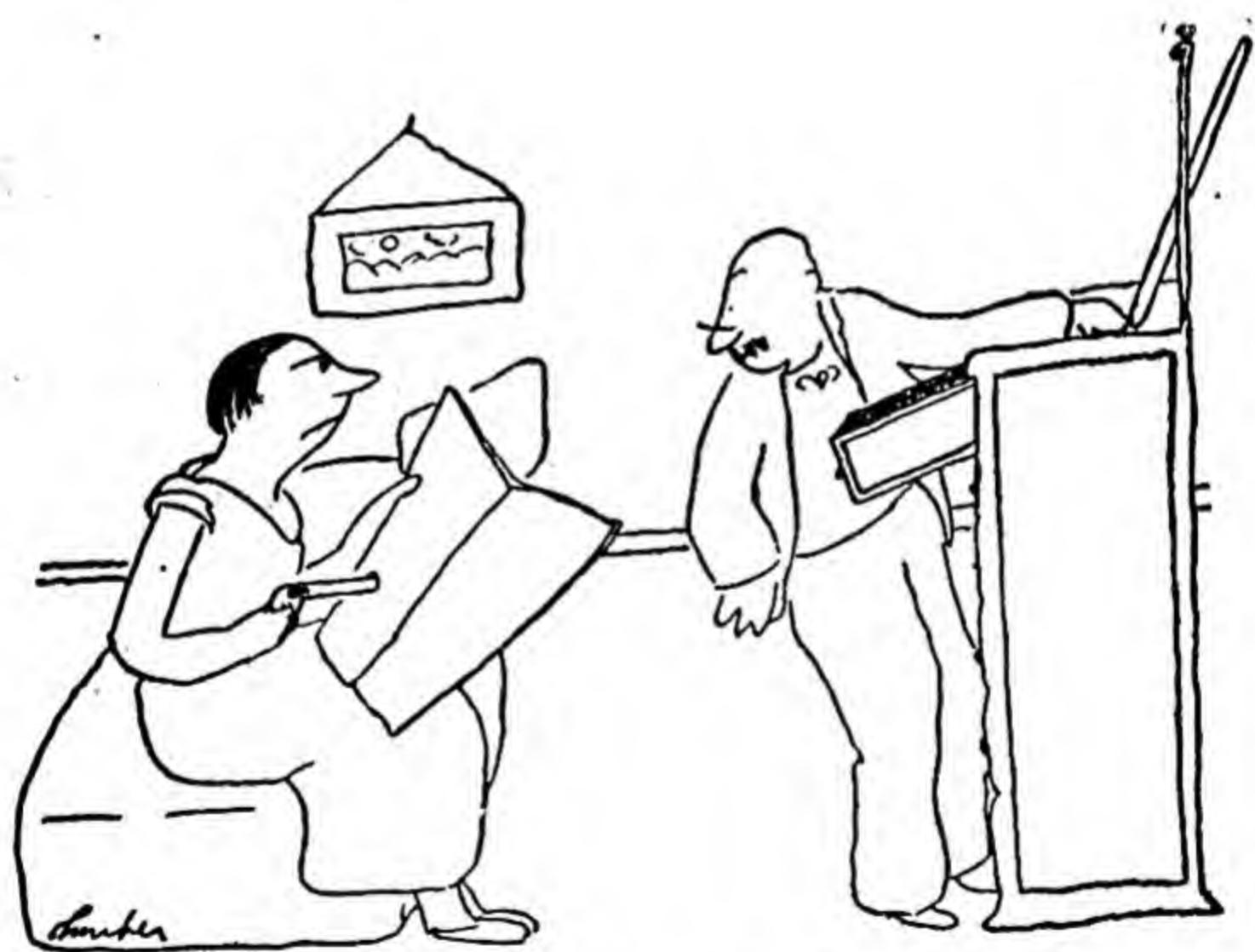


"He's been like this ever since Munich."

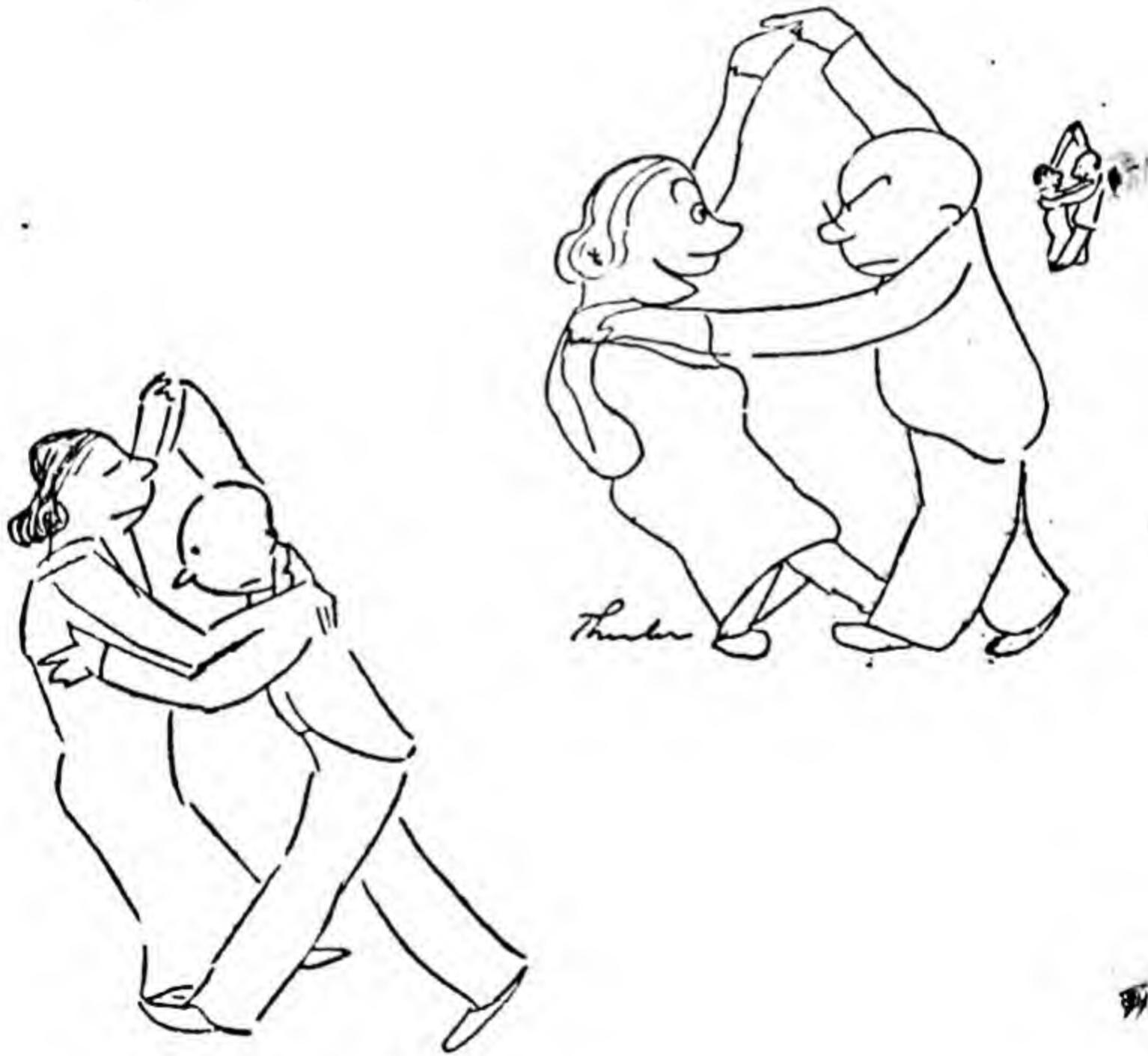




"I wonder what dark flowers grow in the mysterious caverns of your soul."



"Have you seen my pistol, Honeybun?"

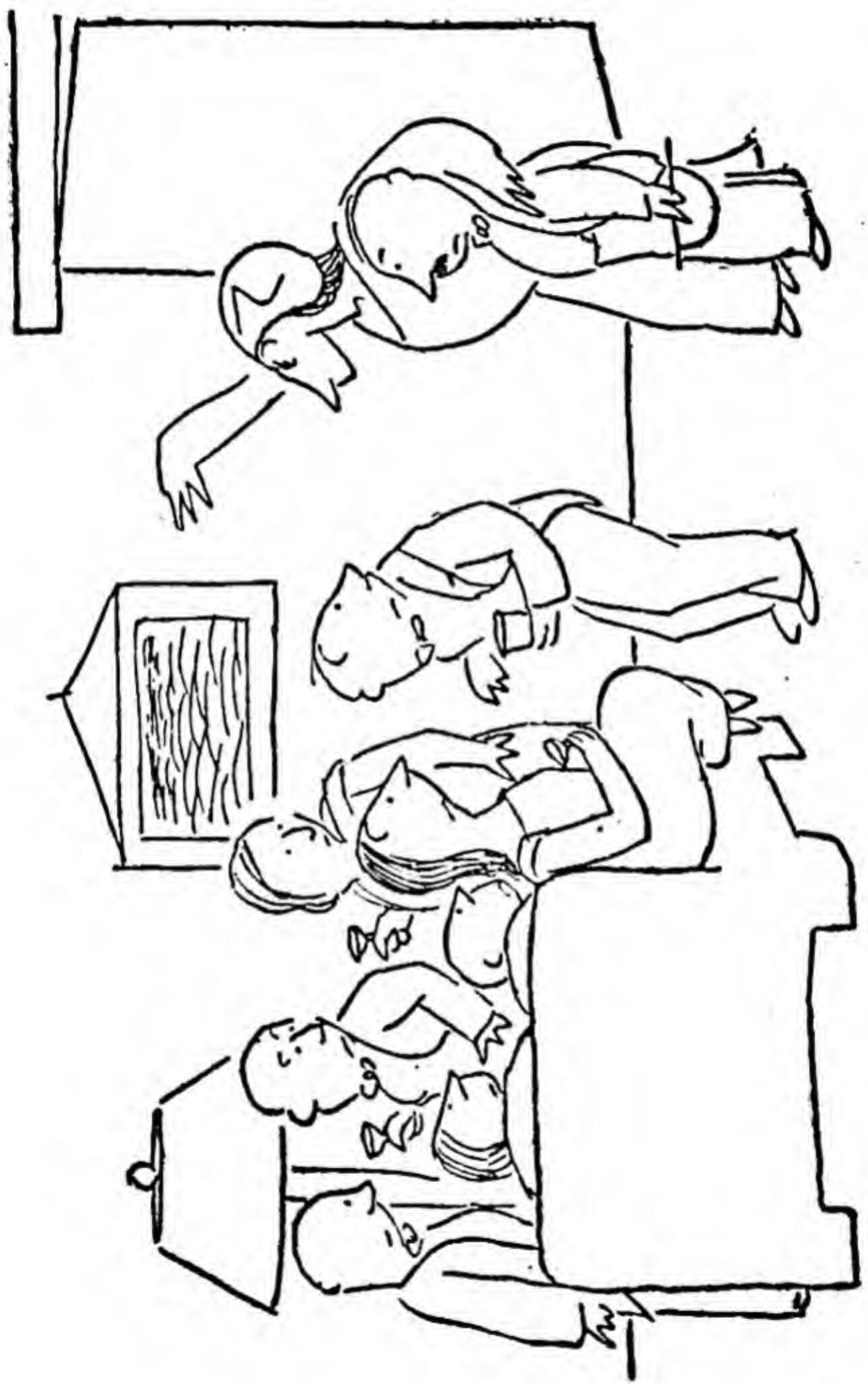




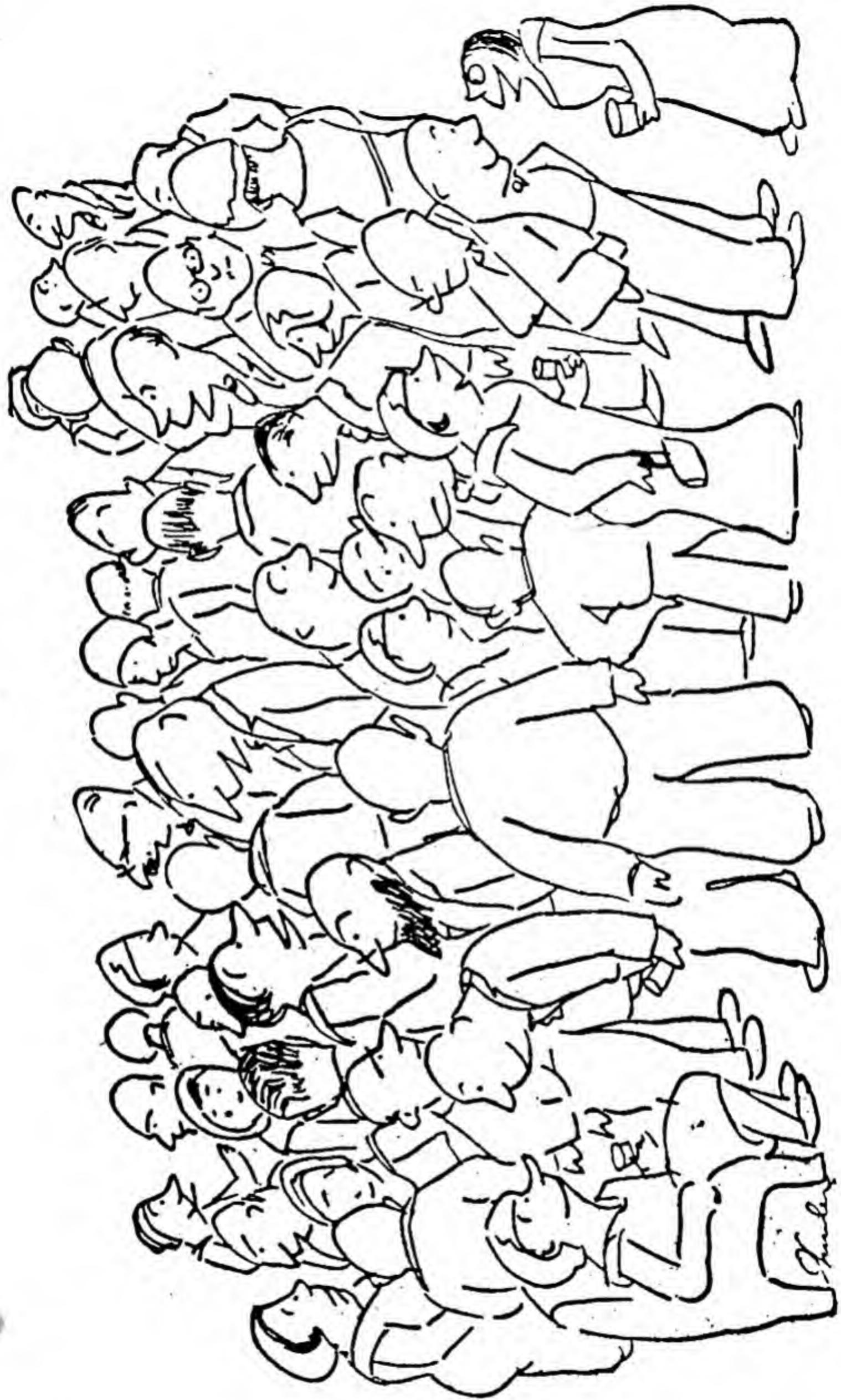
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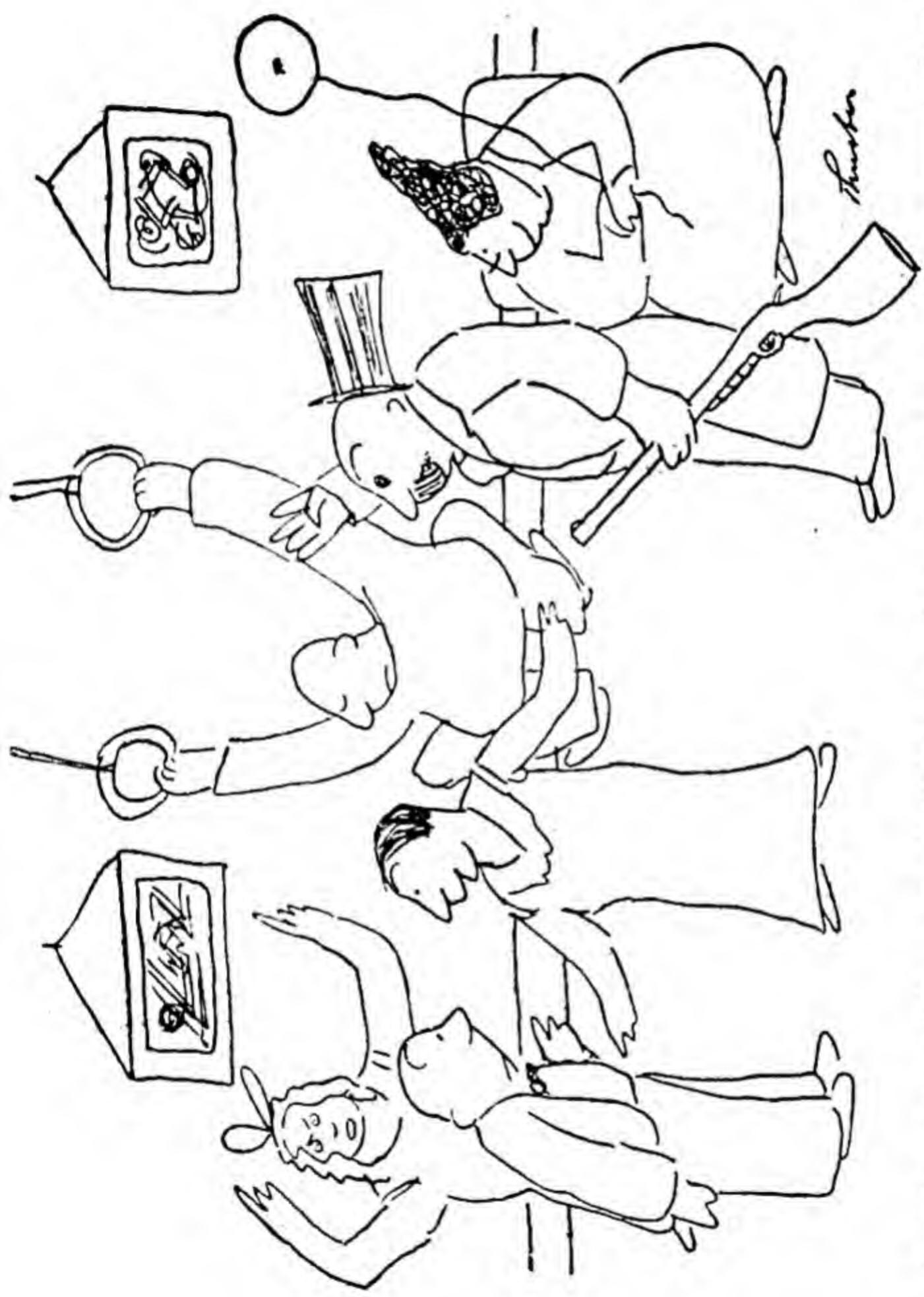


James Lileak



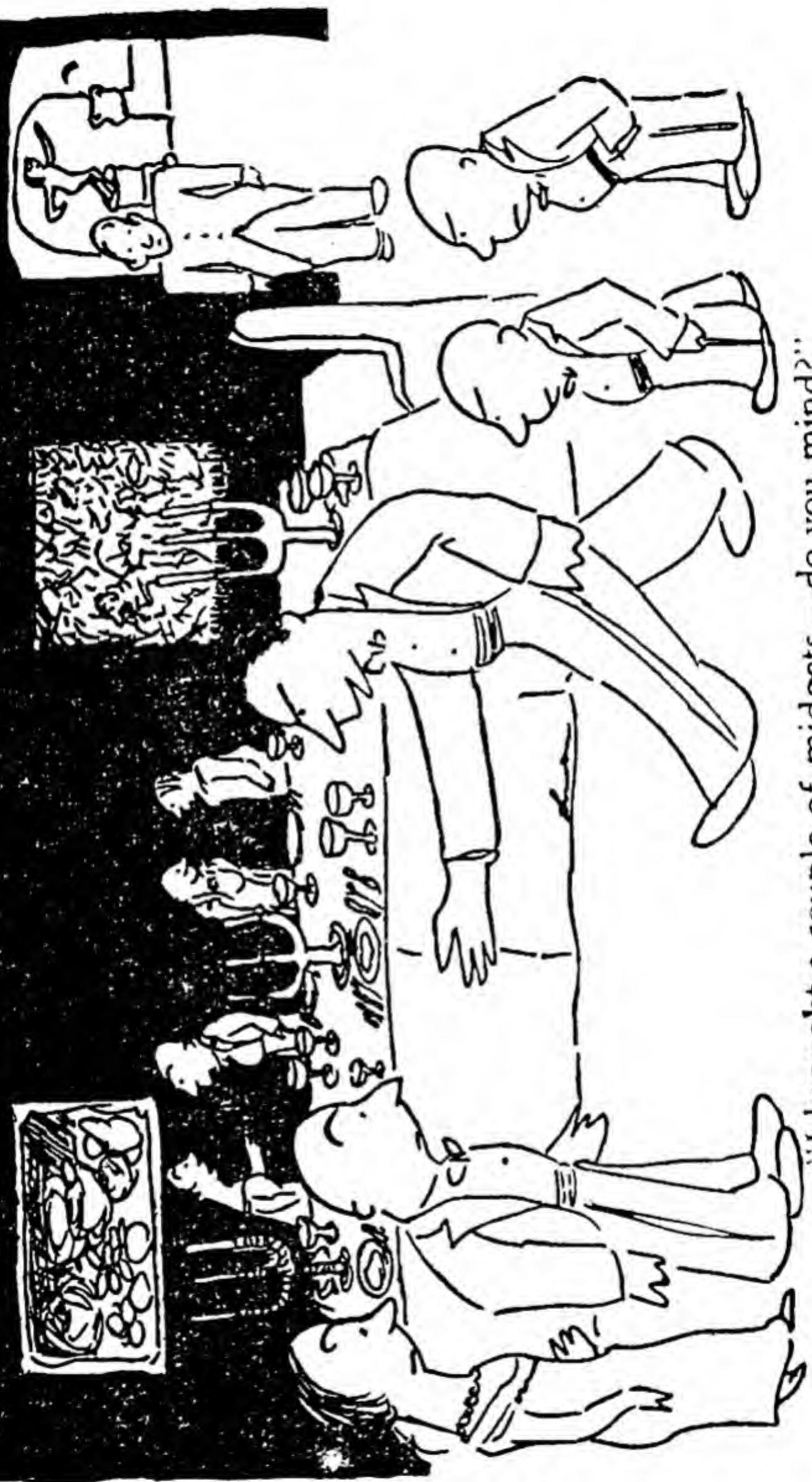
"Yoo-hoo, it's me and the ape man."

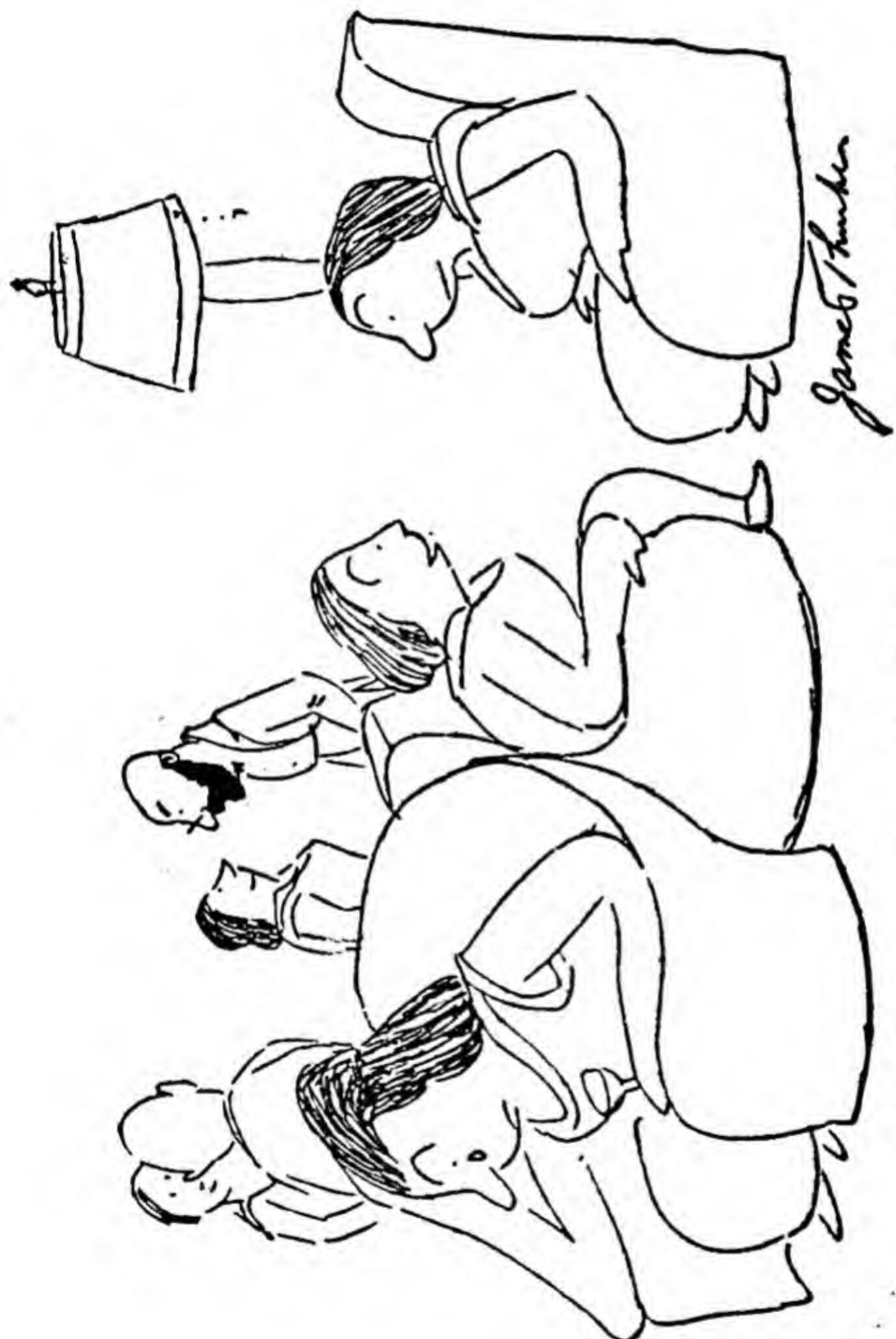




"And *this* is my father, Mr. Williams—home from the wars or something."

"I brought a couple of midgets—do you mind?"

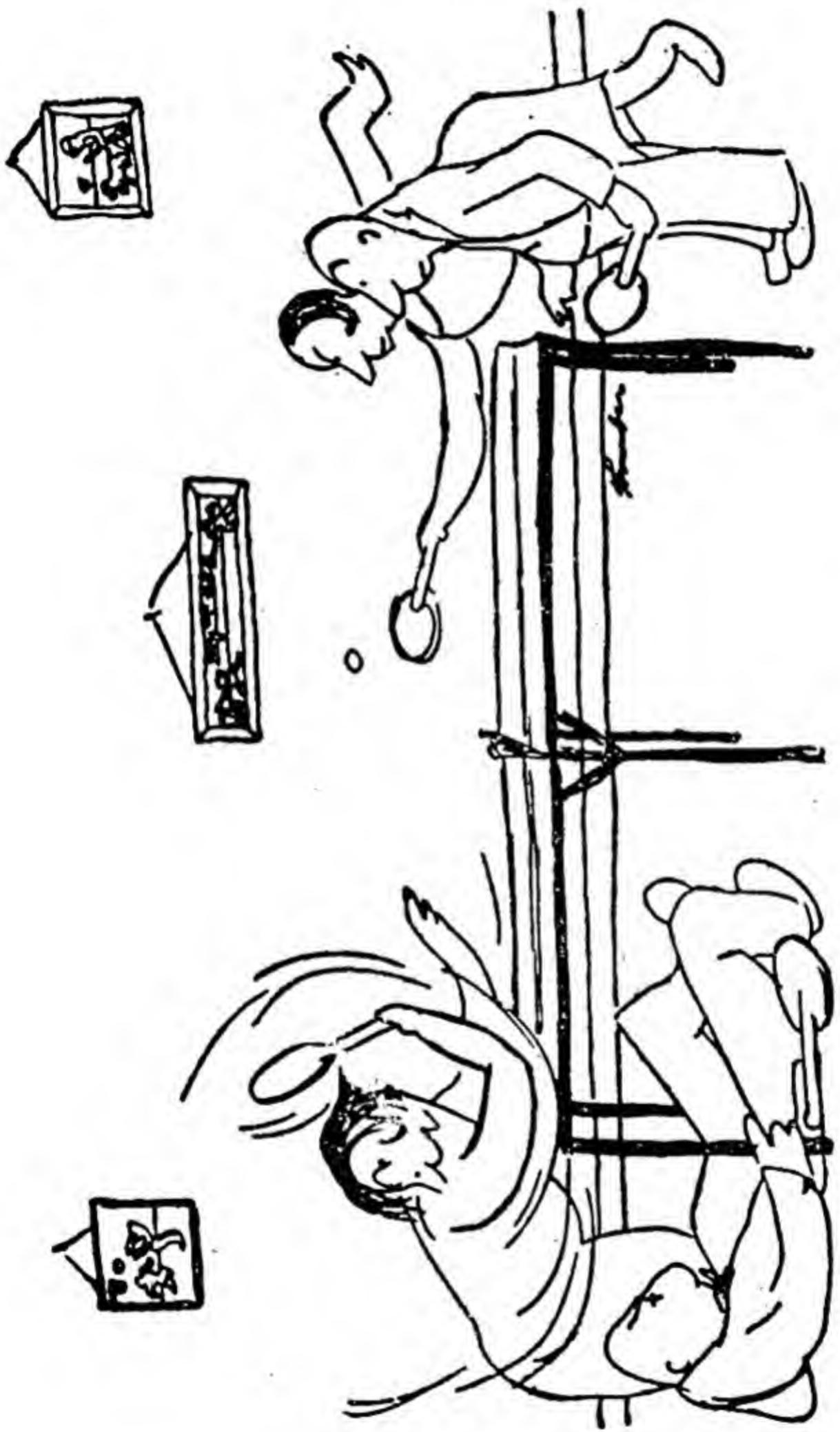




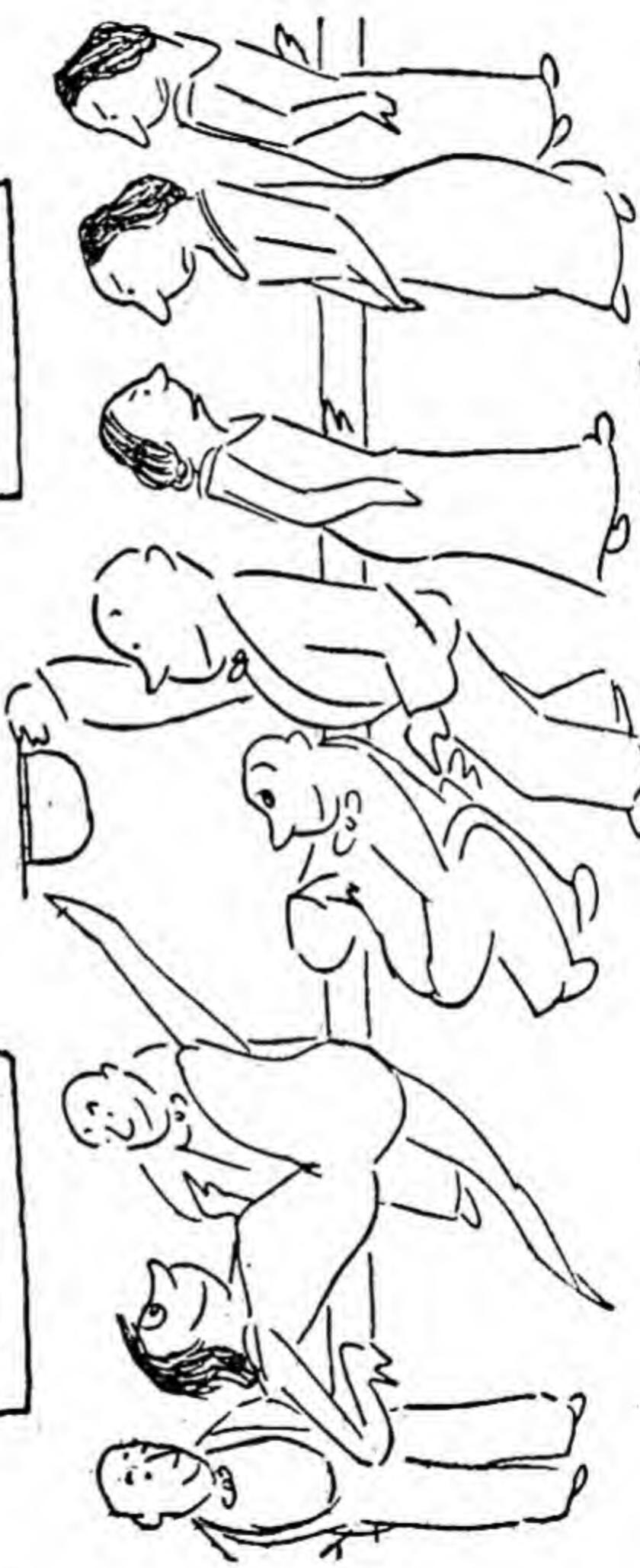
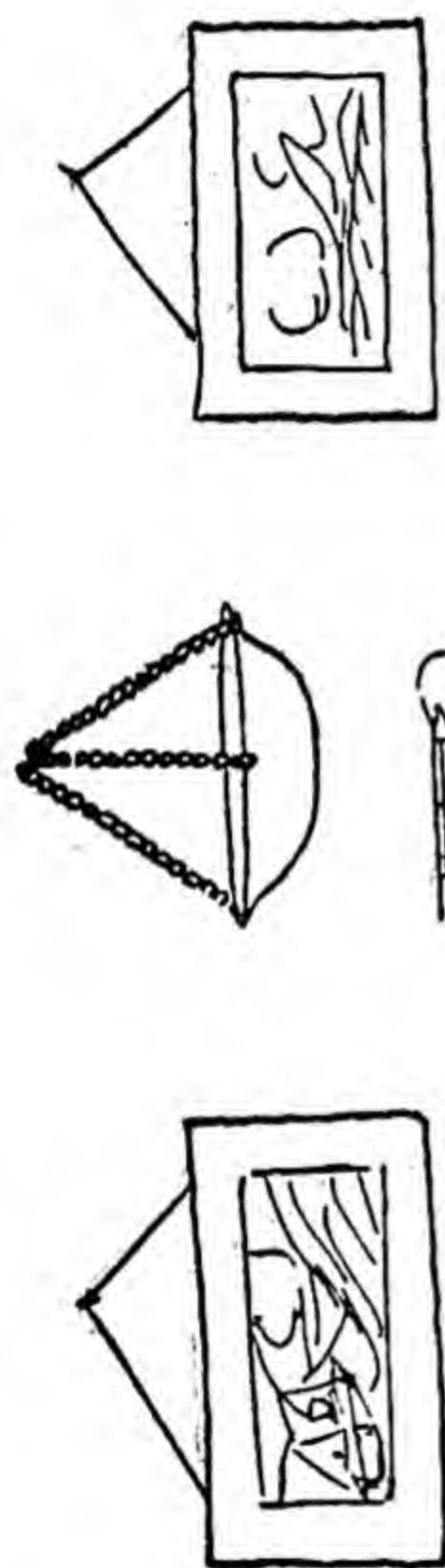
"She's broken up about this play she saw. Thomas Jefferson loses his wife and four children and Monticello."



"It's a naïve domestic Burgundy without any breeding, but
I think you'll be amused by its presumption."

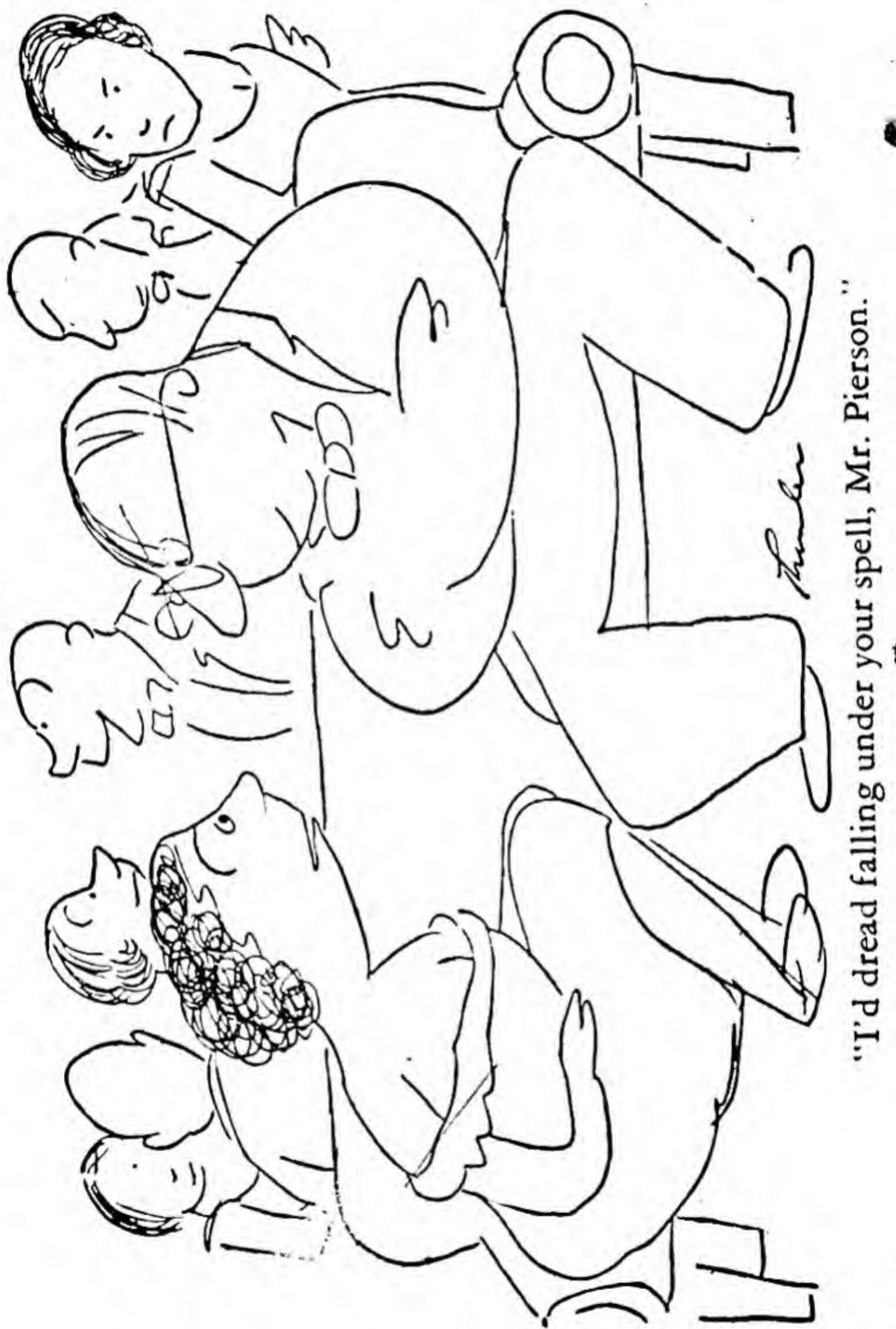


"Sorry, partner!"

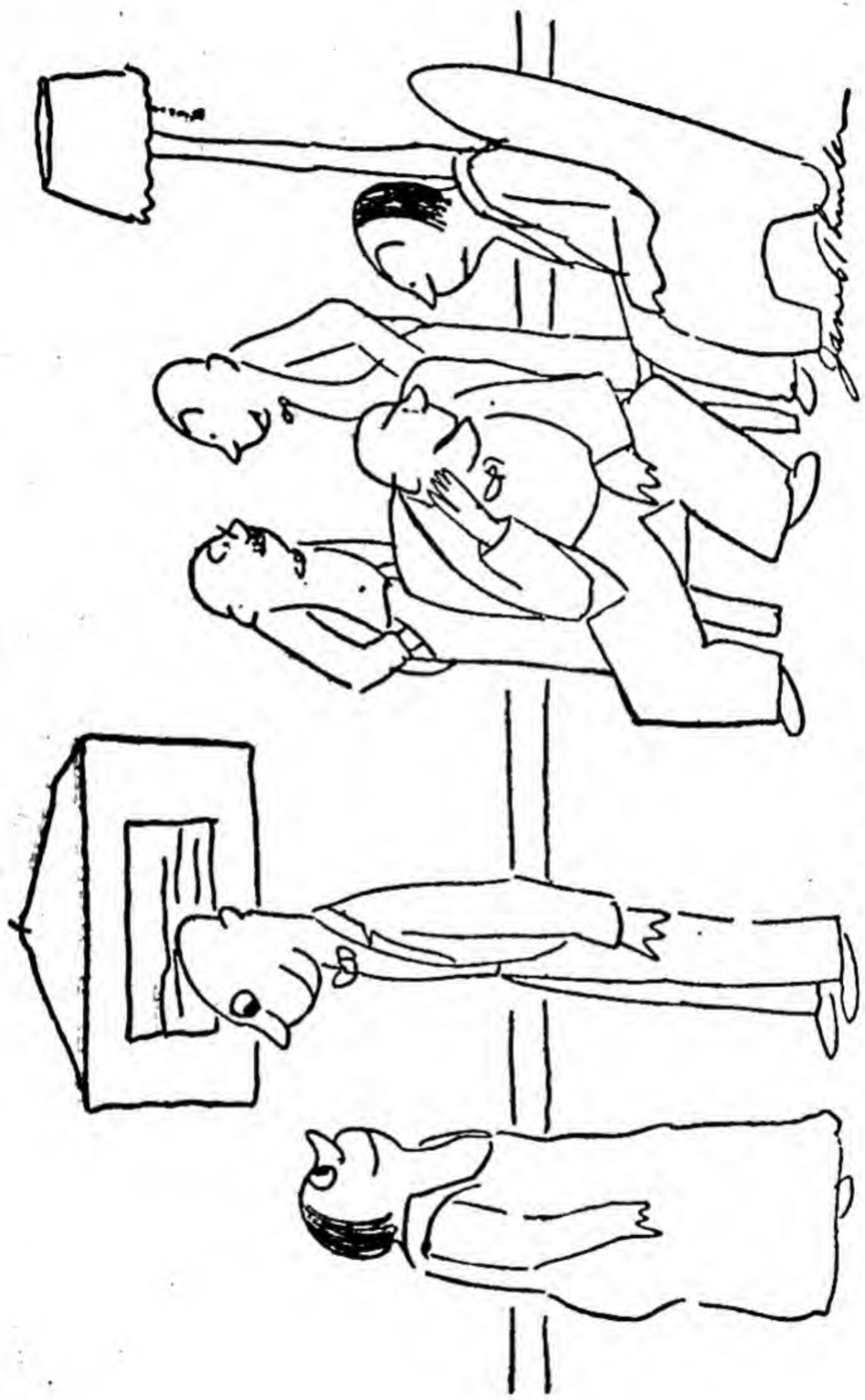


James Thurber

"She's all I know about Bryn Mawr and she's all I have to know."



"Le cœur a ses raisons, Mrs. Bence, que la raison ne connaît pas."

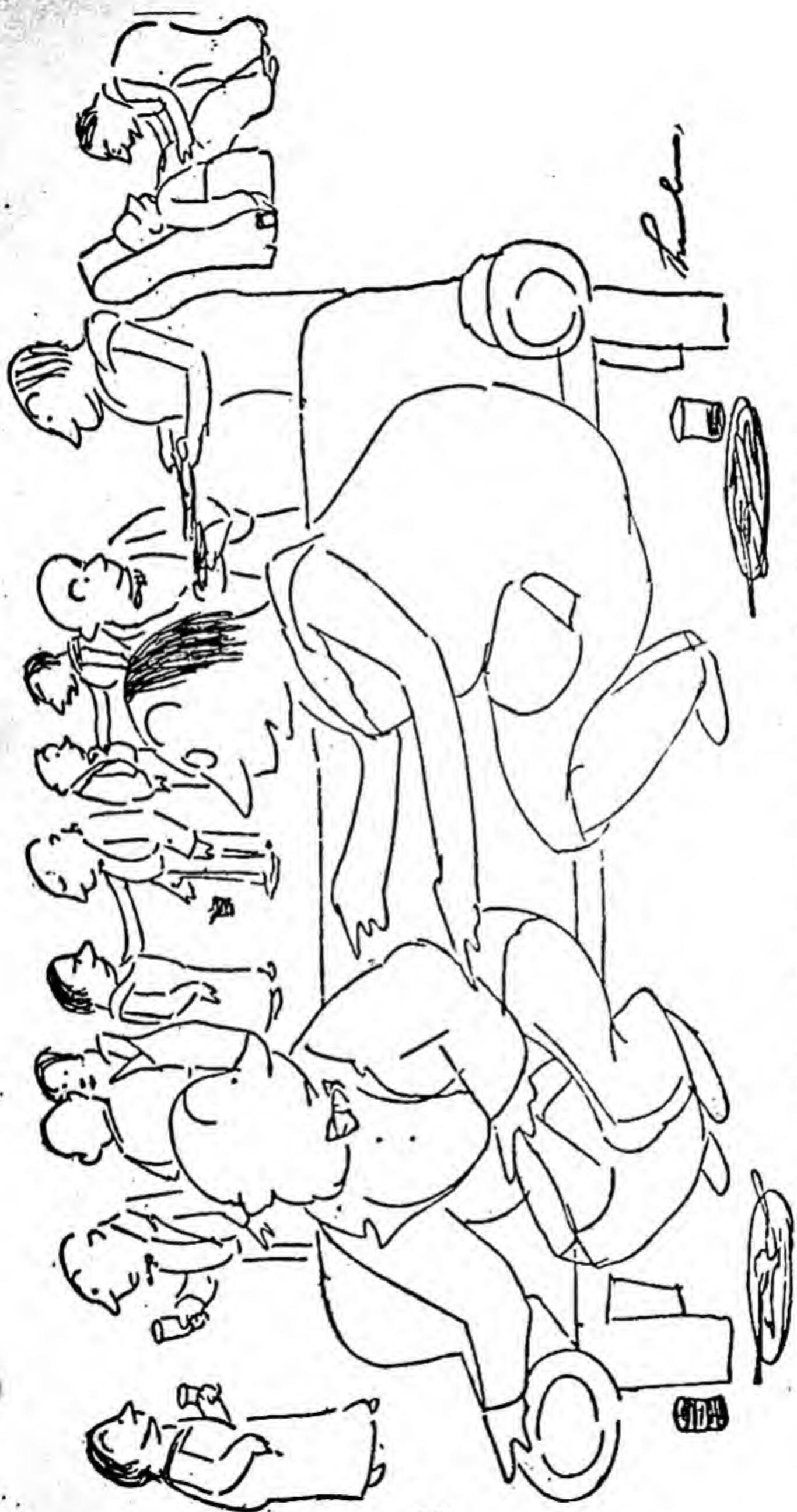




Jane & Thelon

"Here's to m' first wife, darling—she only wore one hat,
. God bless 'er!"

"I'm offering you sanctuary, Dr. Mason."



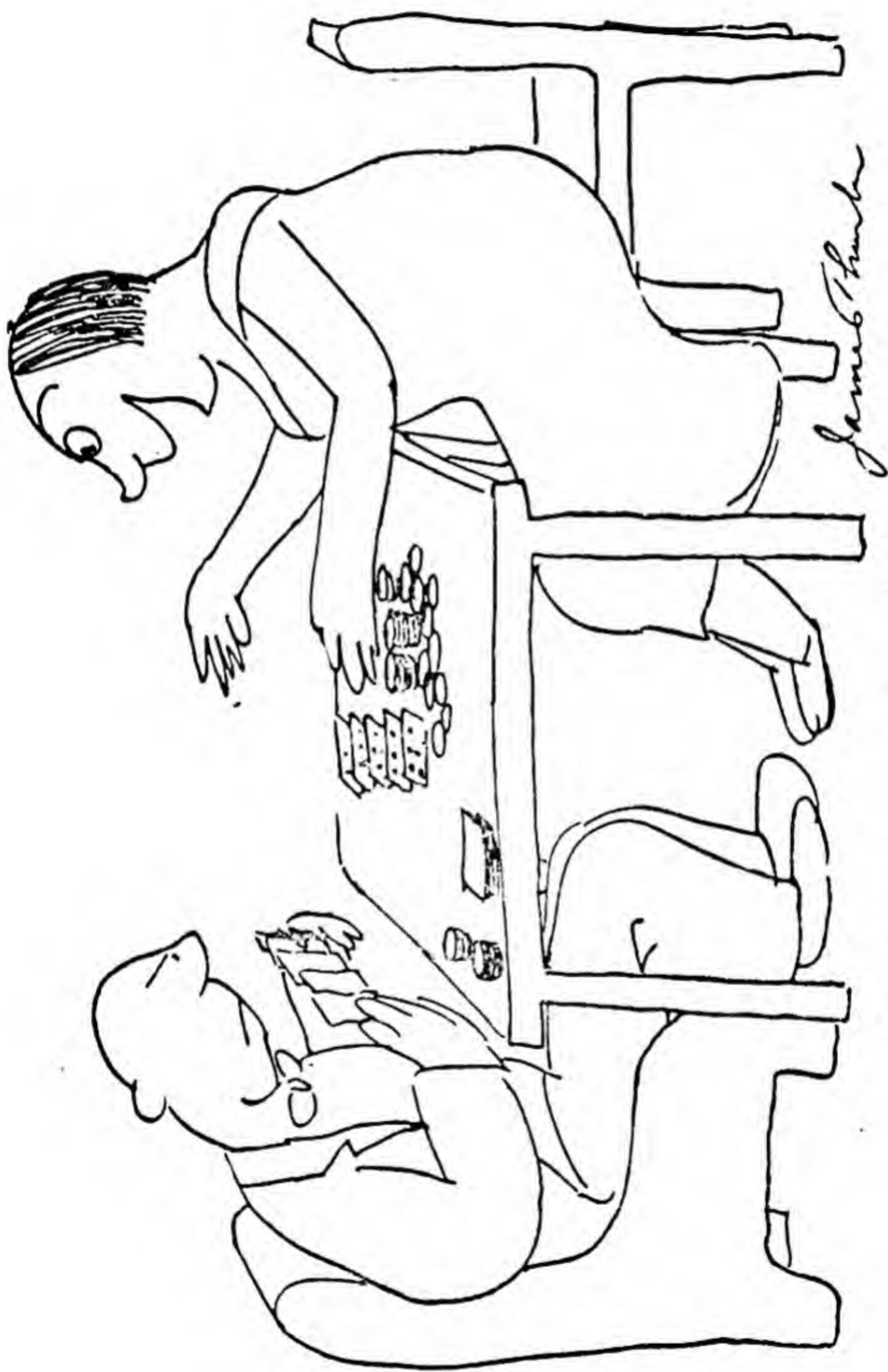
"That martyred look won't get you anywhere with me!"



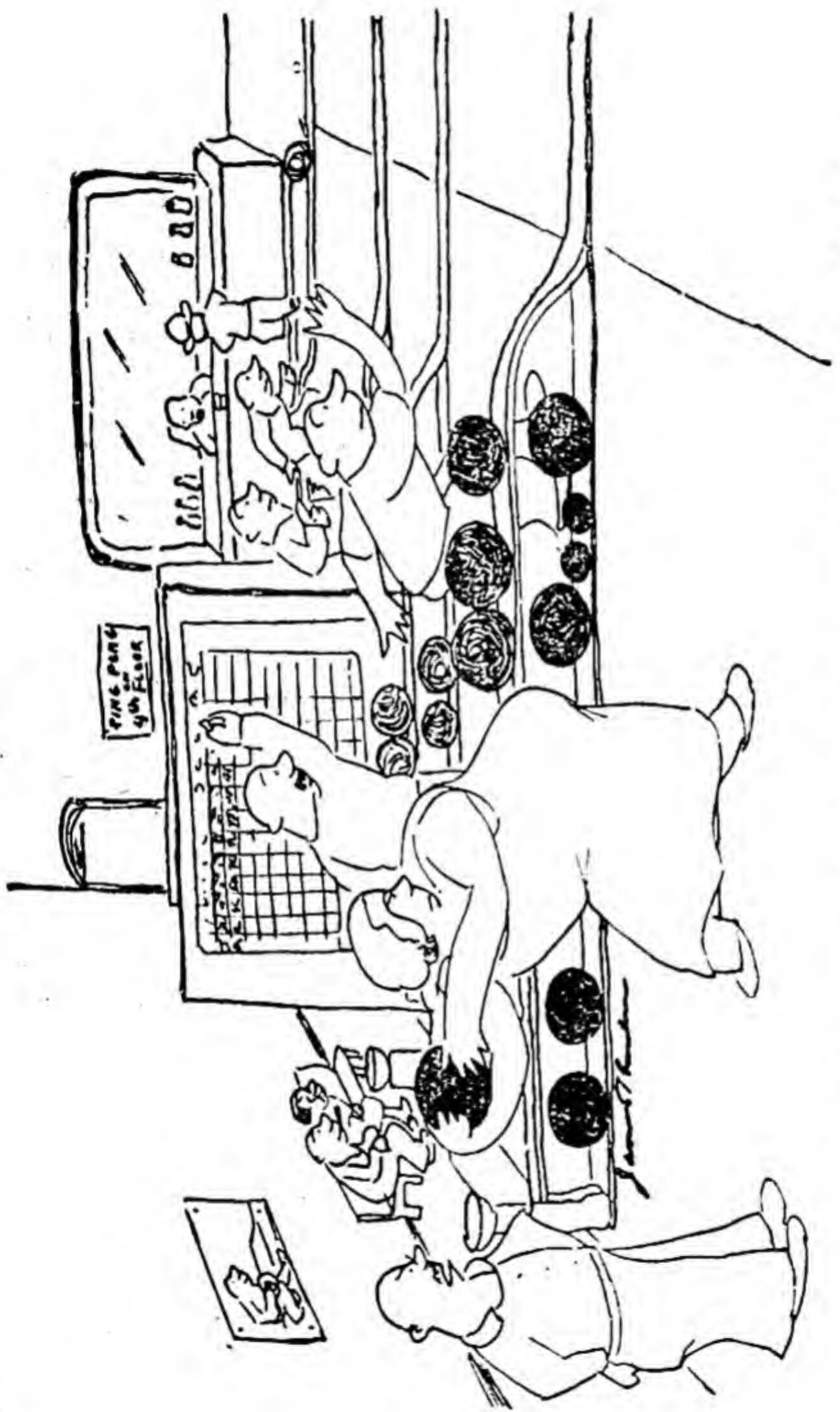
Have you no code, man?



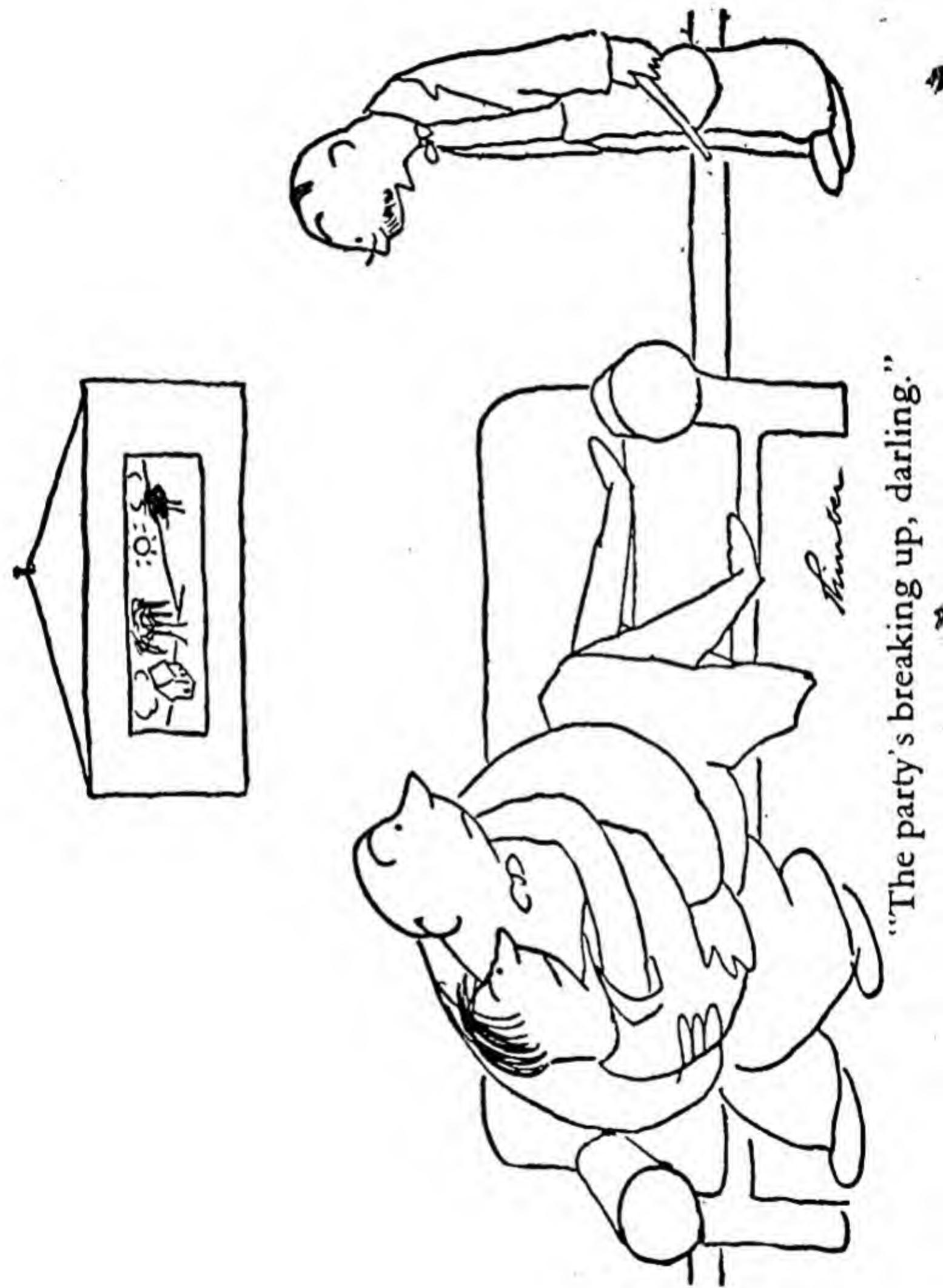
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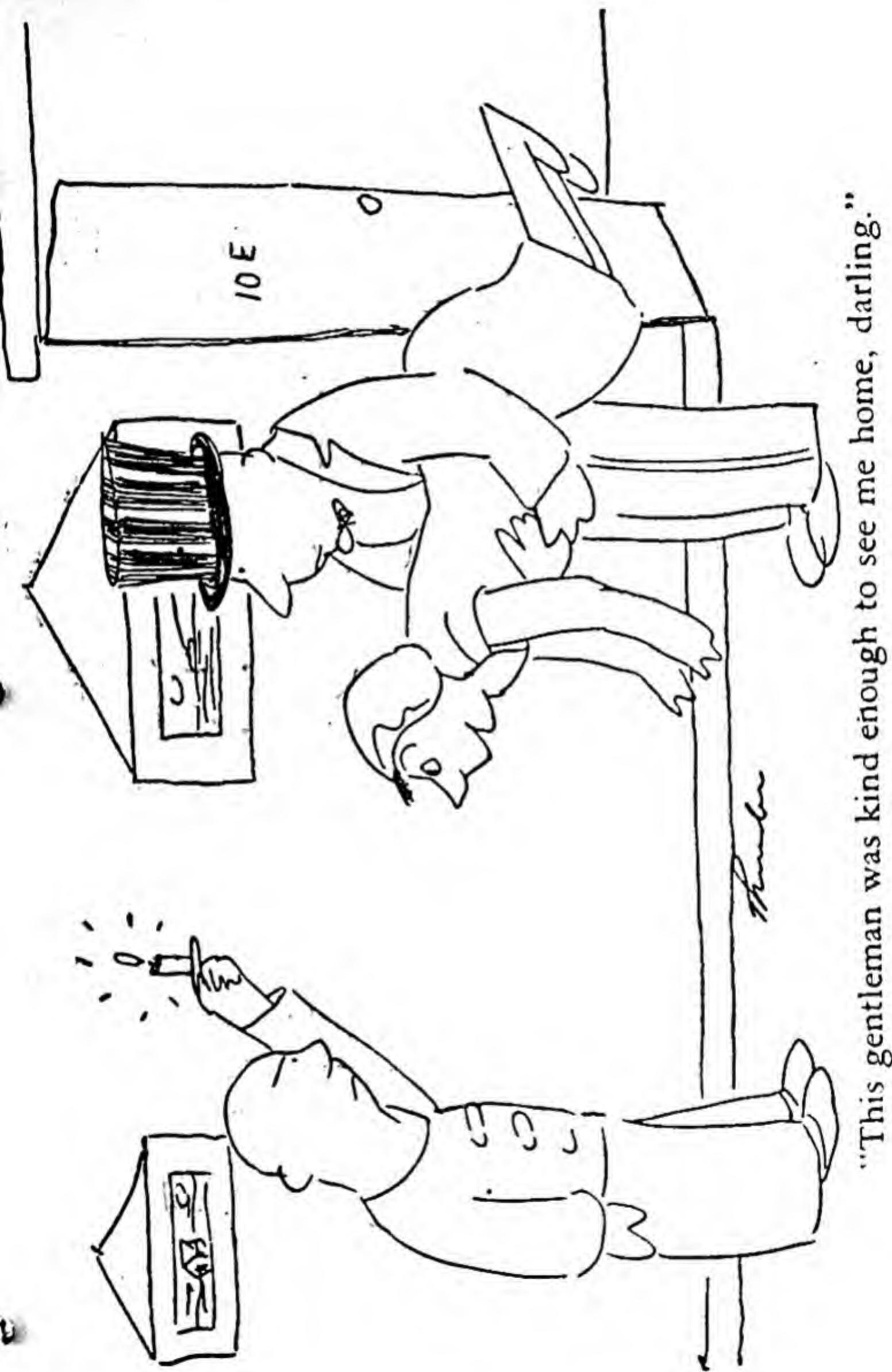
"I drew three more clubs and filled my flush!"



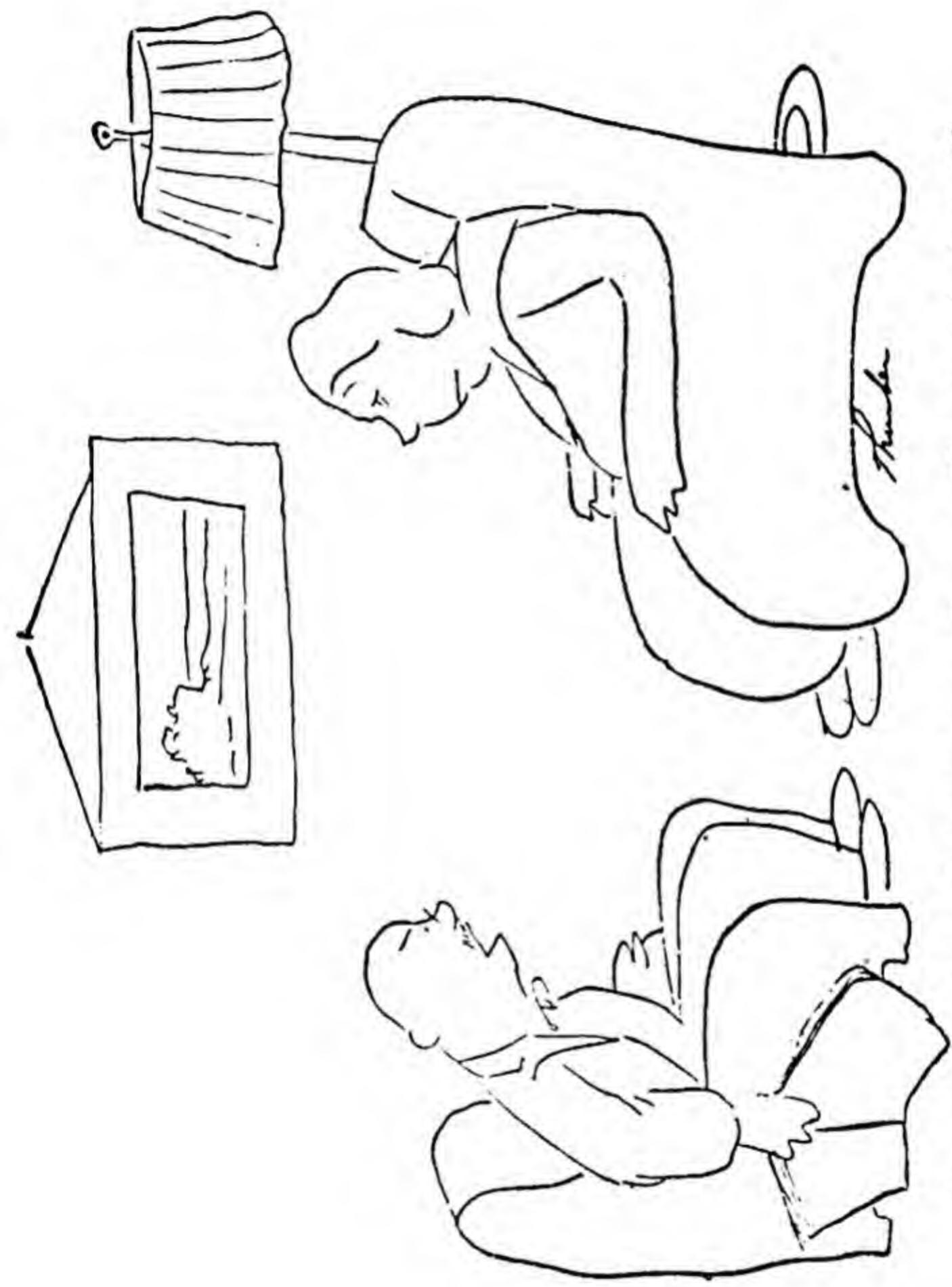
"All right, all right, try it that way! Go ahead and try it that way!"



"The party's breaking up, darling."

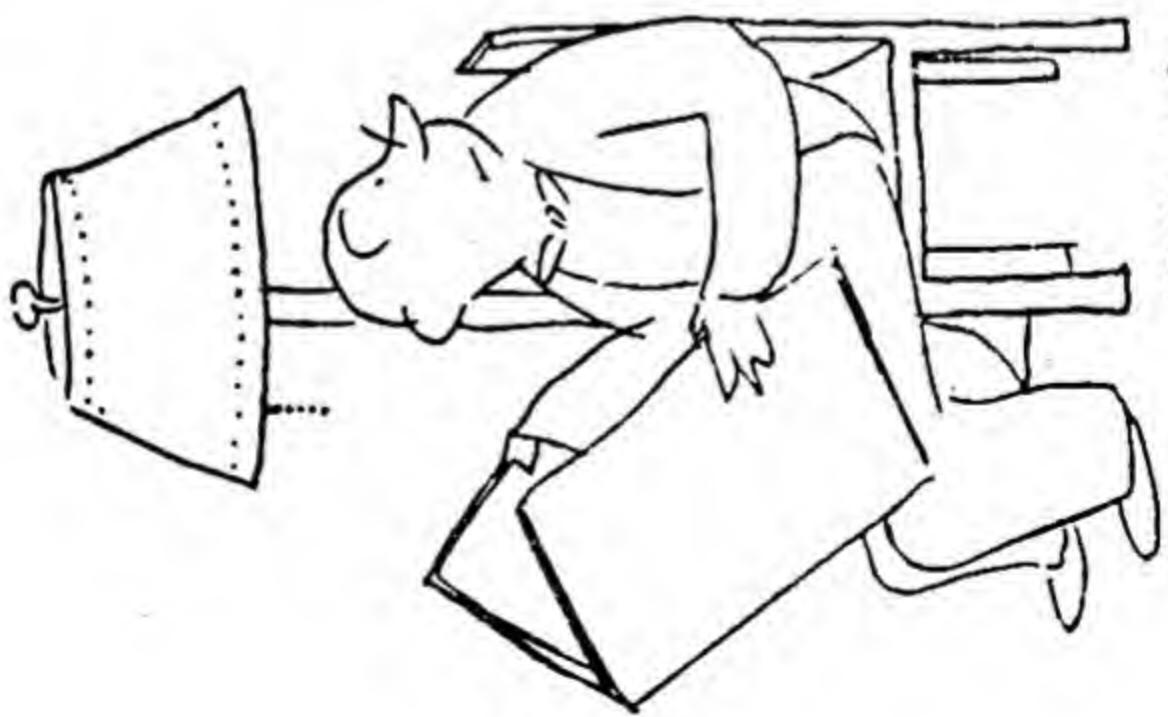
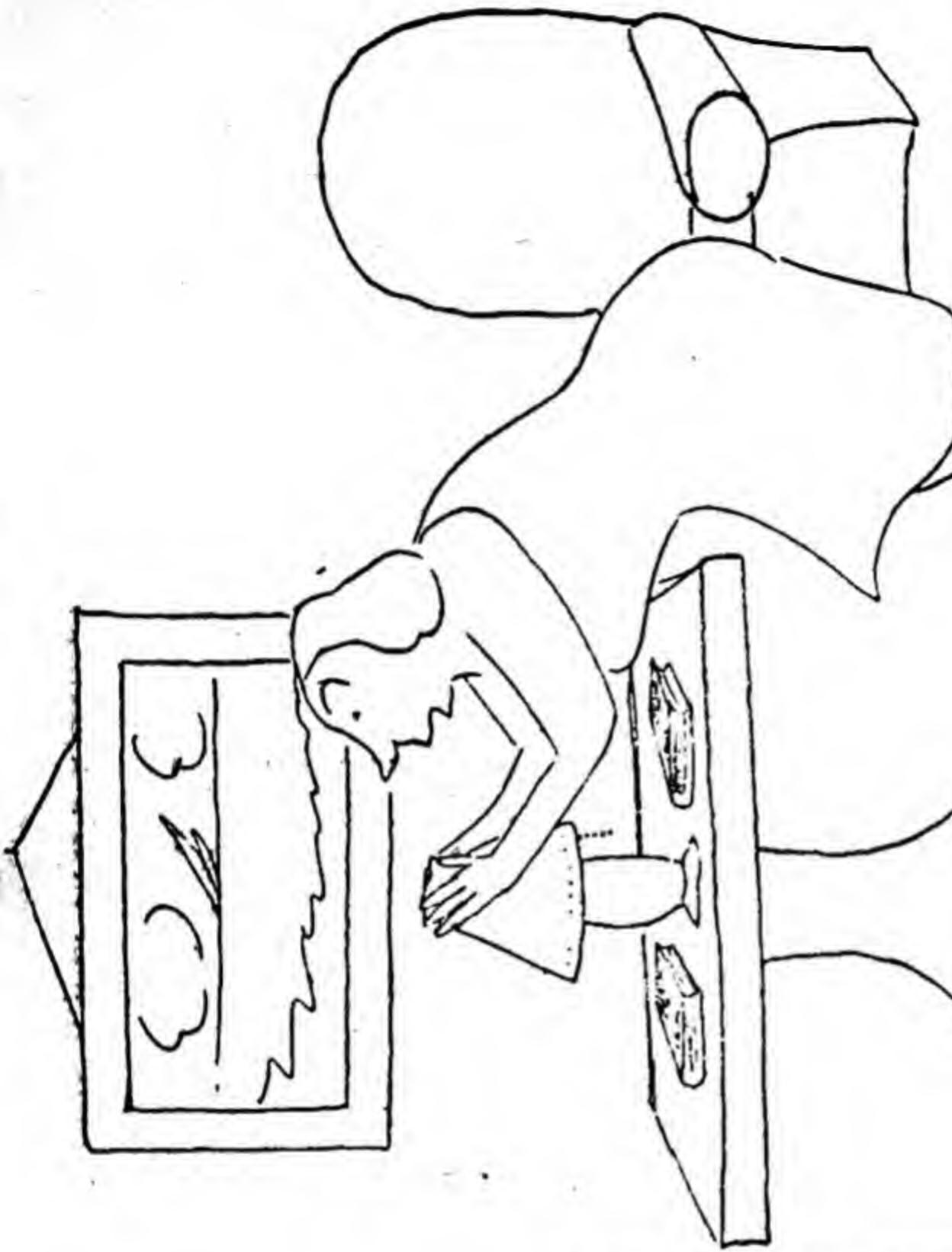
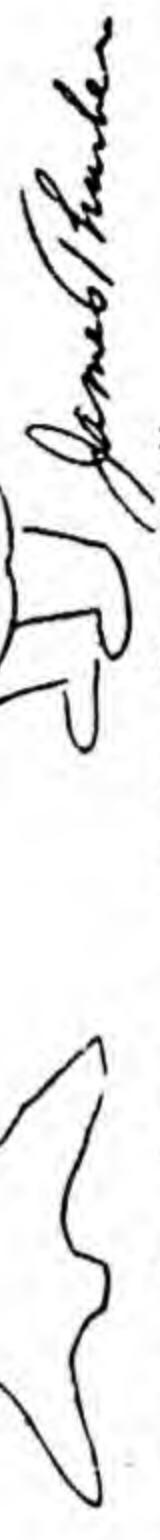


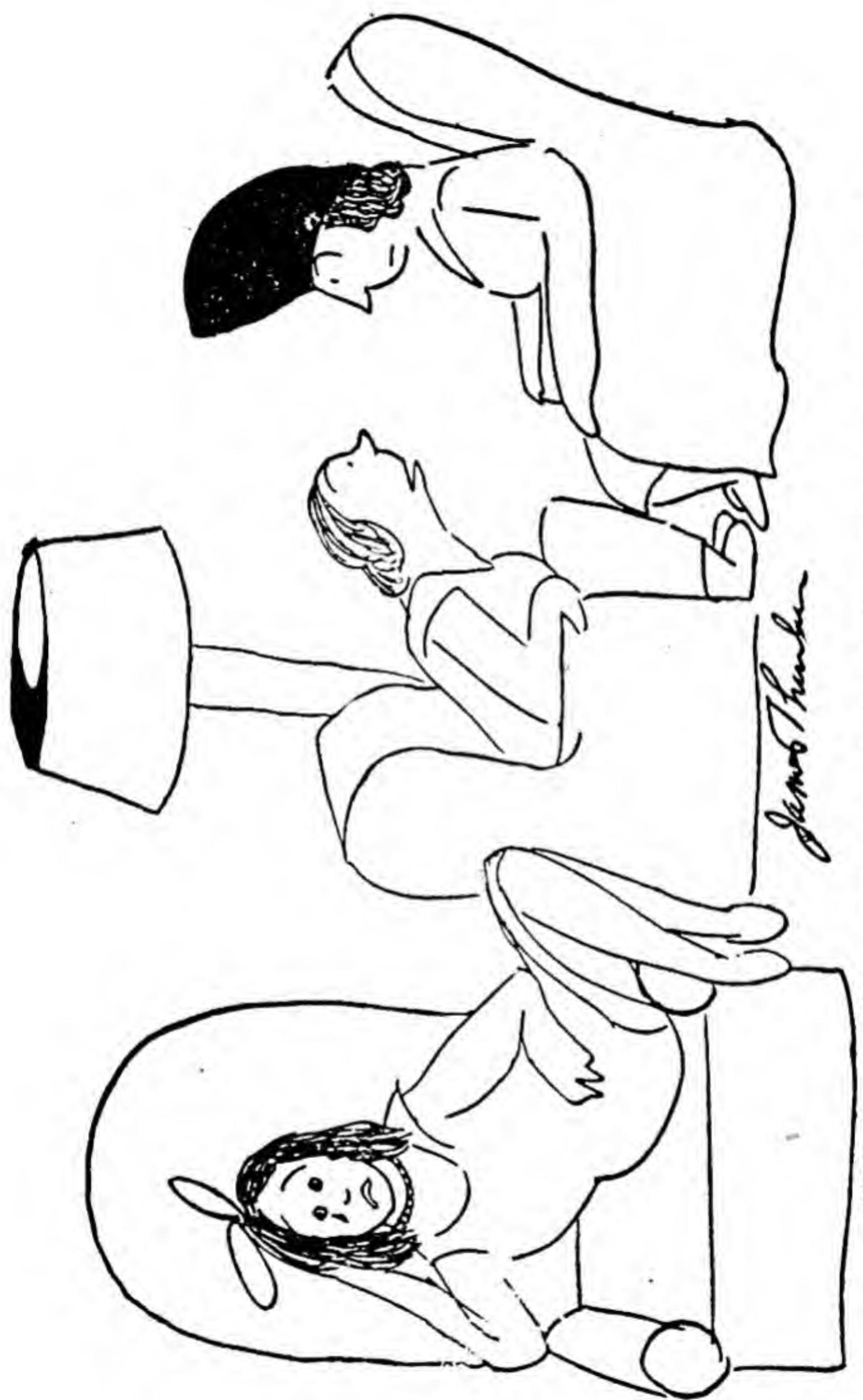
"This gentleman was kind enough to see me home, darling."



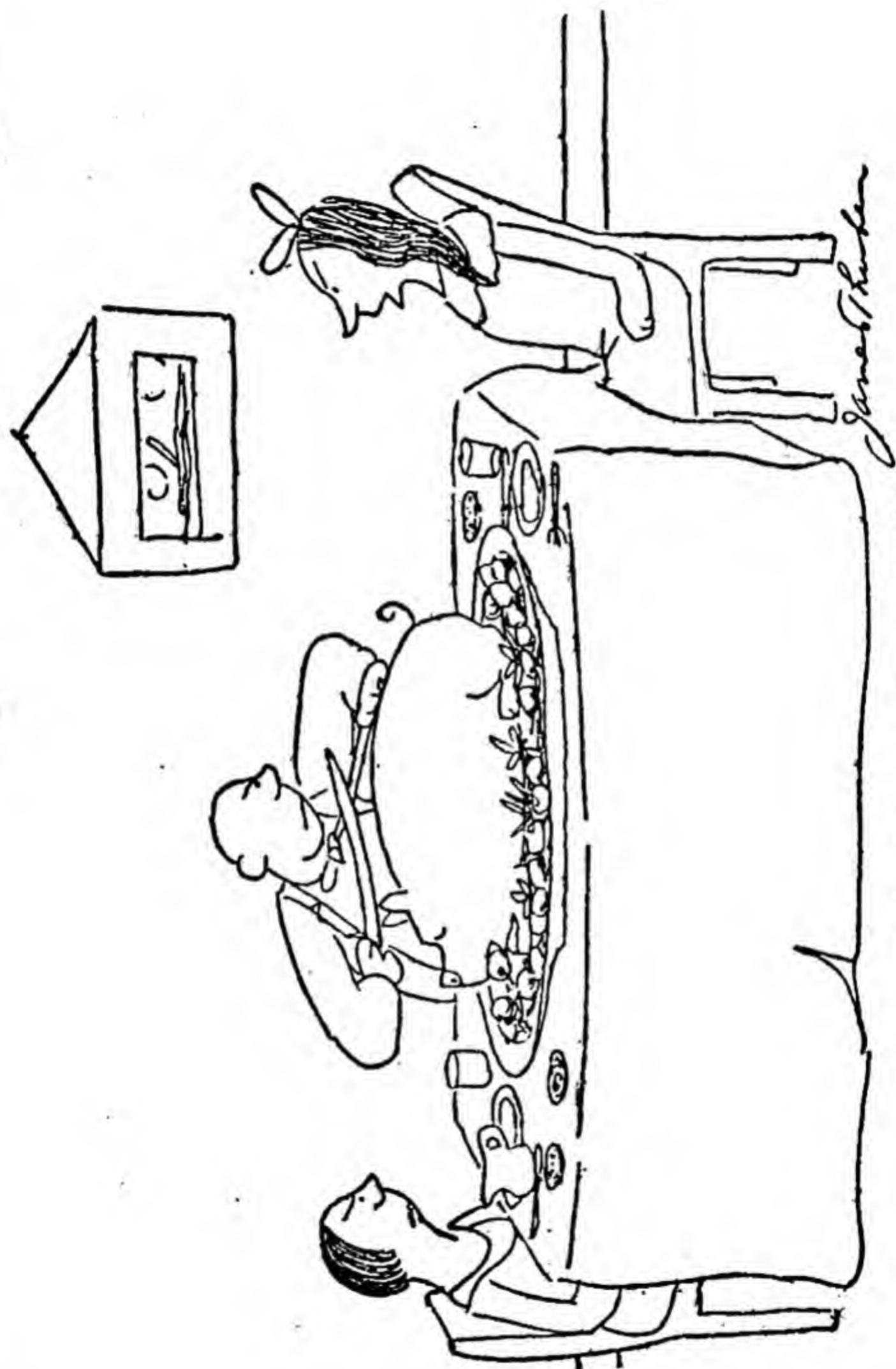
"I assume, then, that you regard yourself as omniscient. If I am wrong, correct me!"

"What do you want me to do with your remains, George?"

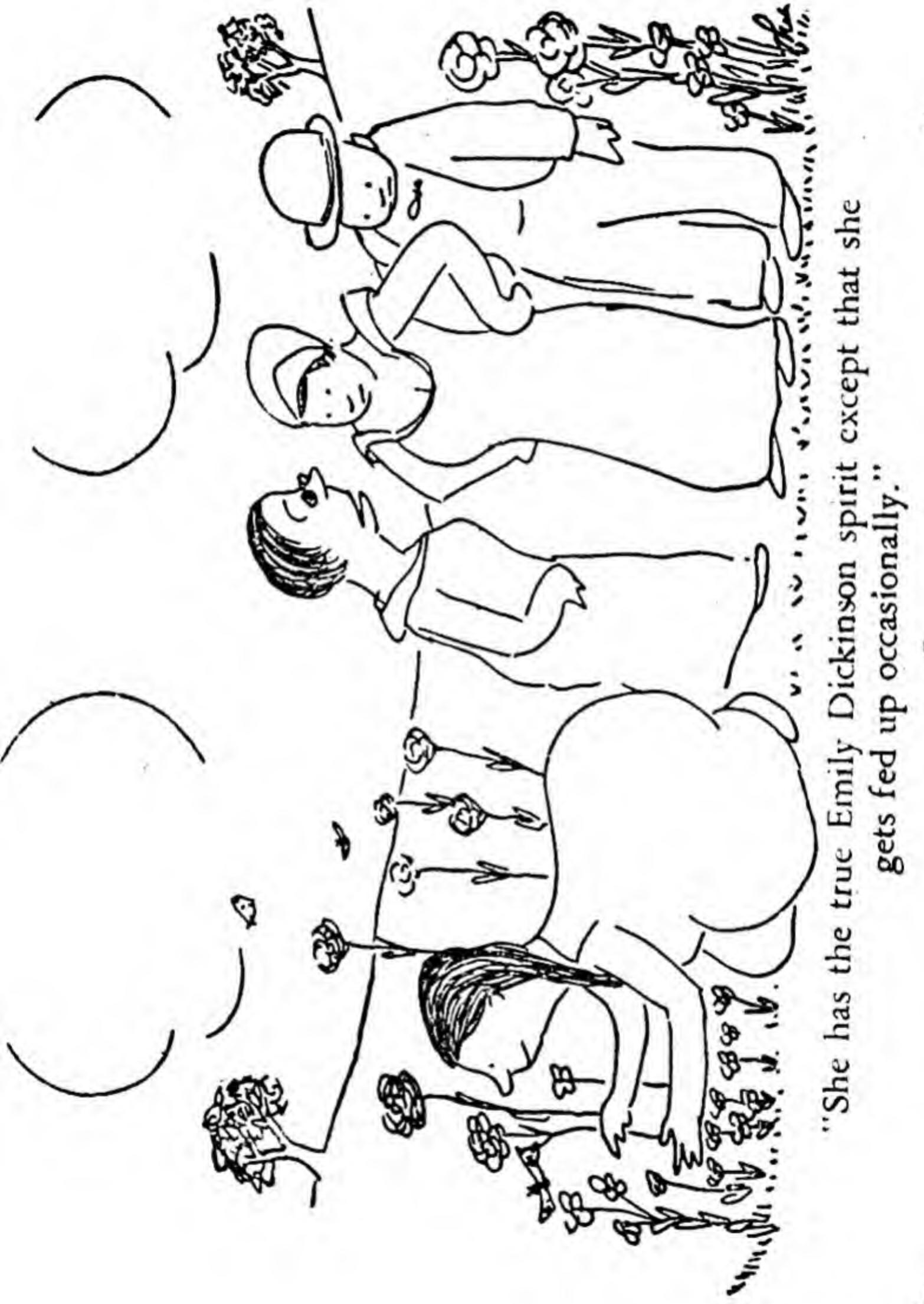




"She's reading some novel that's breaking her heart, but
we don't know where she hides it."

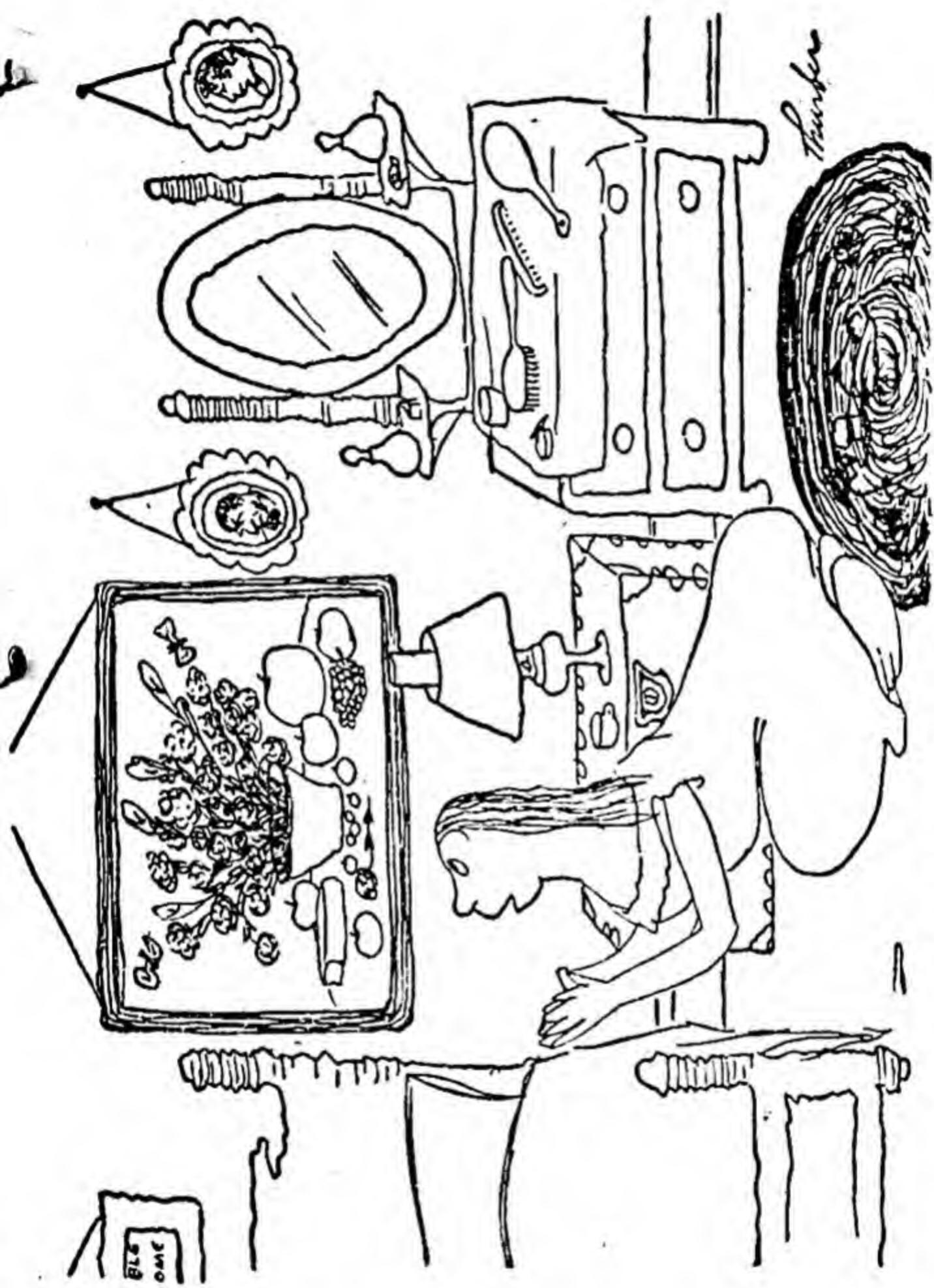


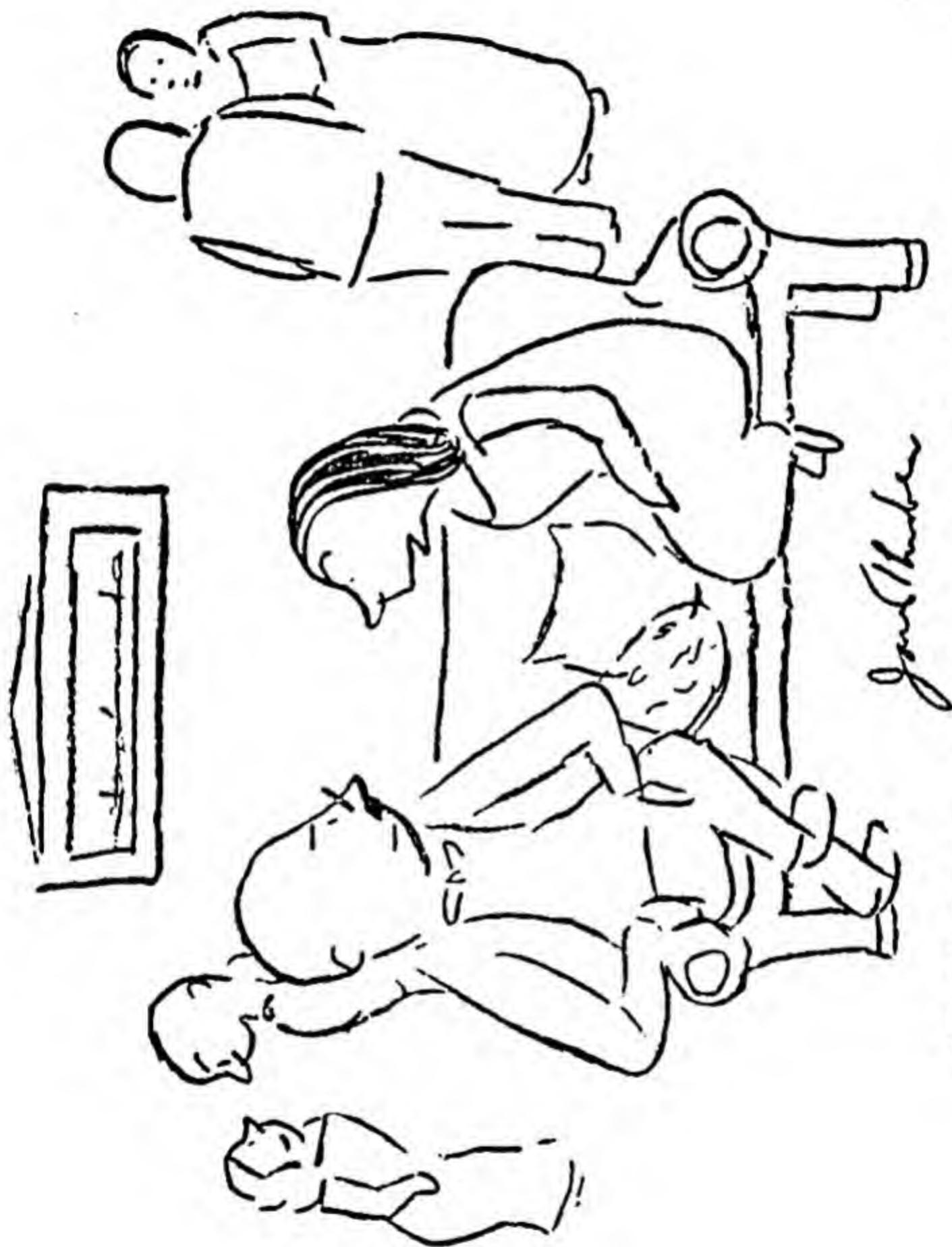
"I don't want any part of it!"



"She has the true Emily Dickinson spirit except that she gets fed up occasionally."

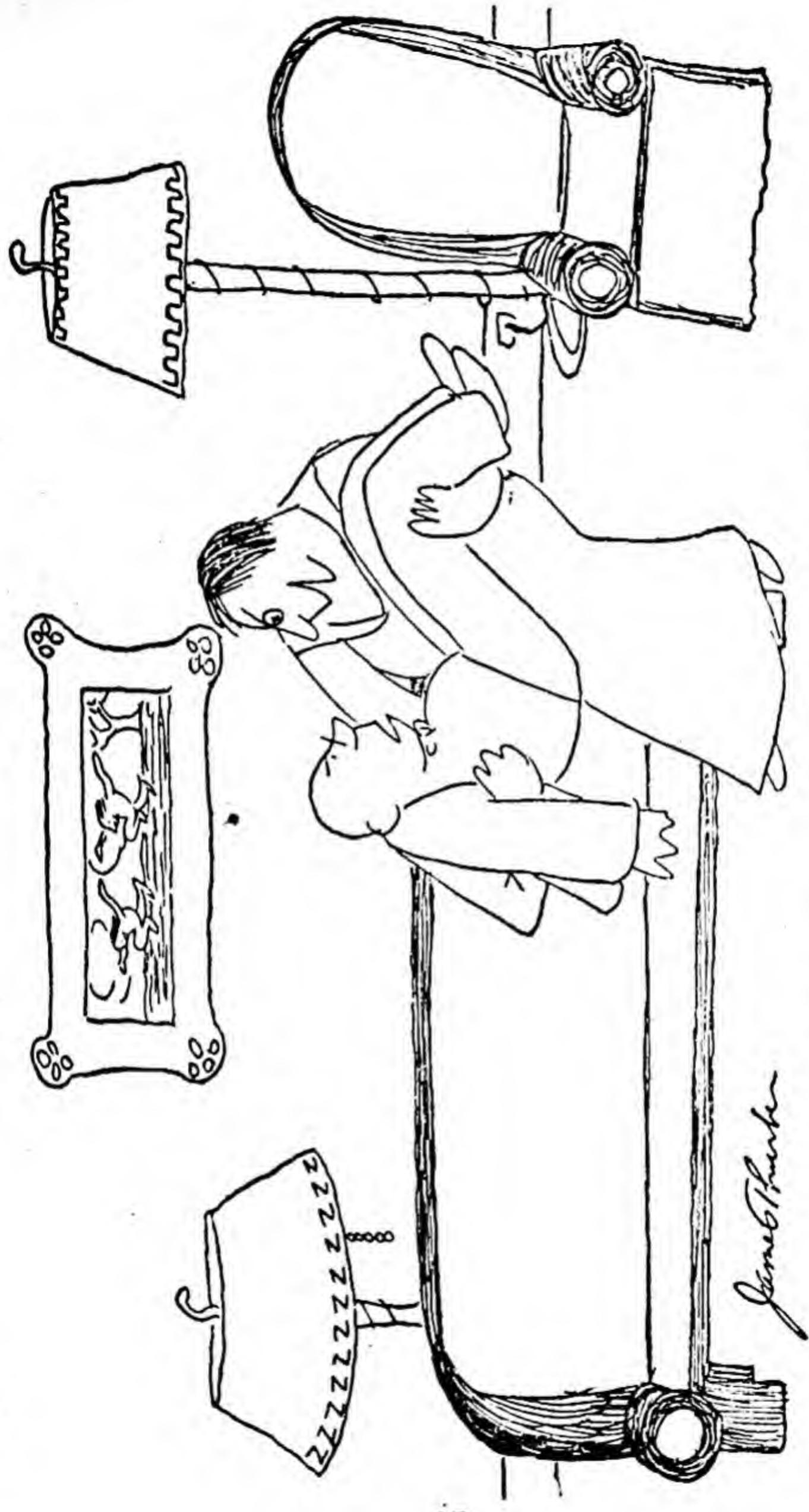
... and keep me a normal, healthy girl."





gentle

"I think of you as being enormously alive."

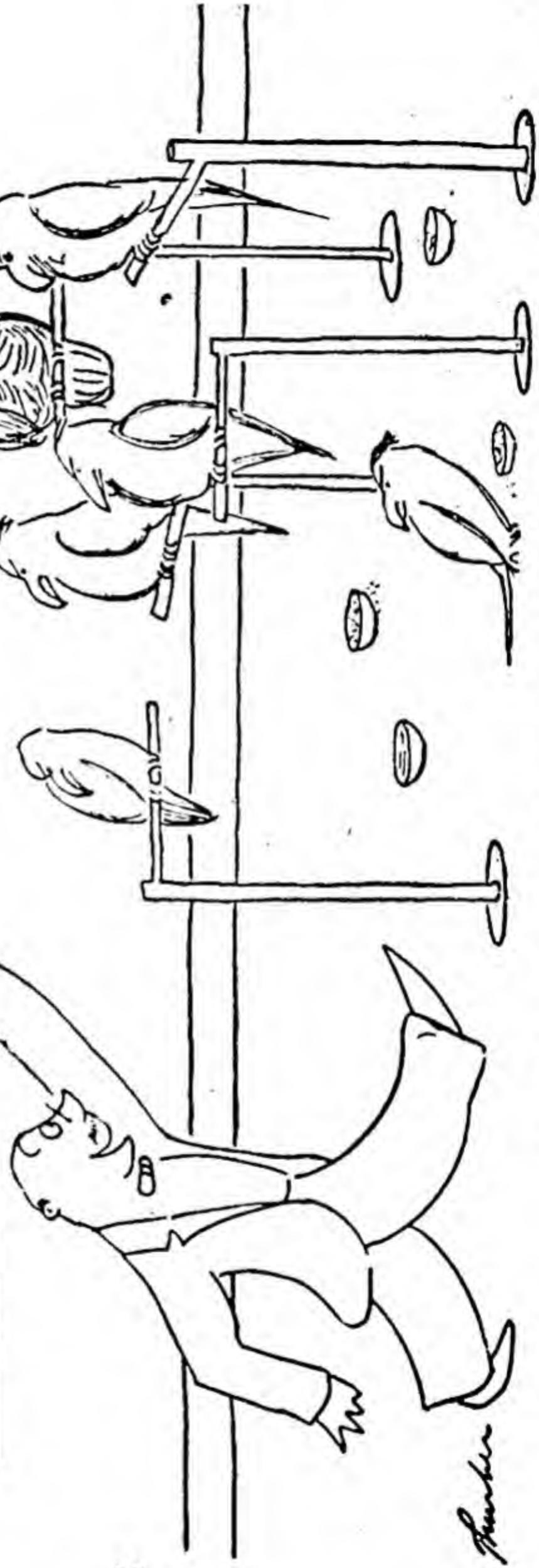


"You're going a bit far, Miss Blanchard."

Jane Blanchard

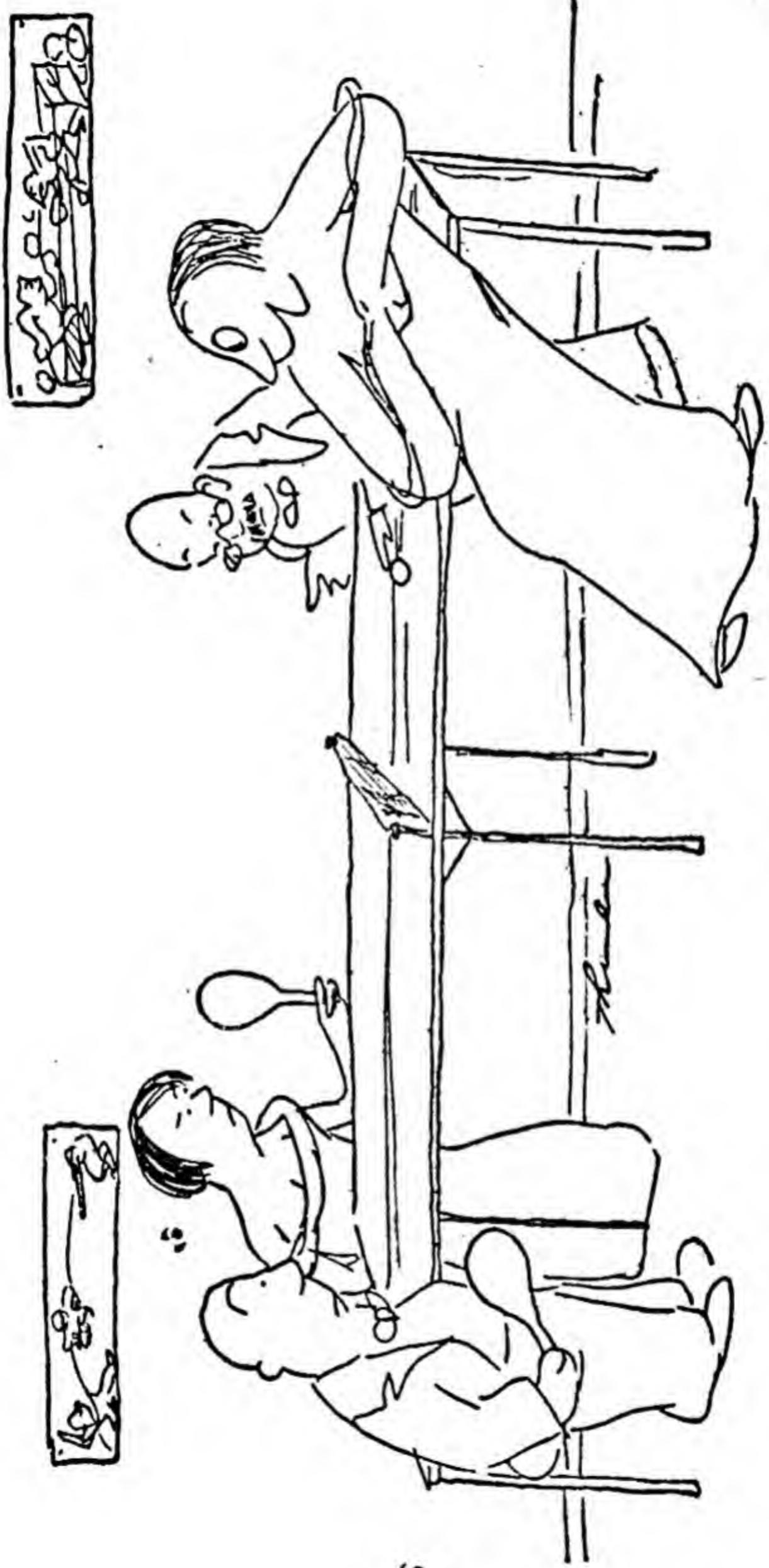
"Good morning, my feathered friends!"

hans

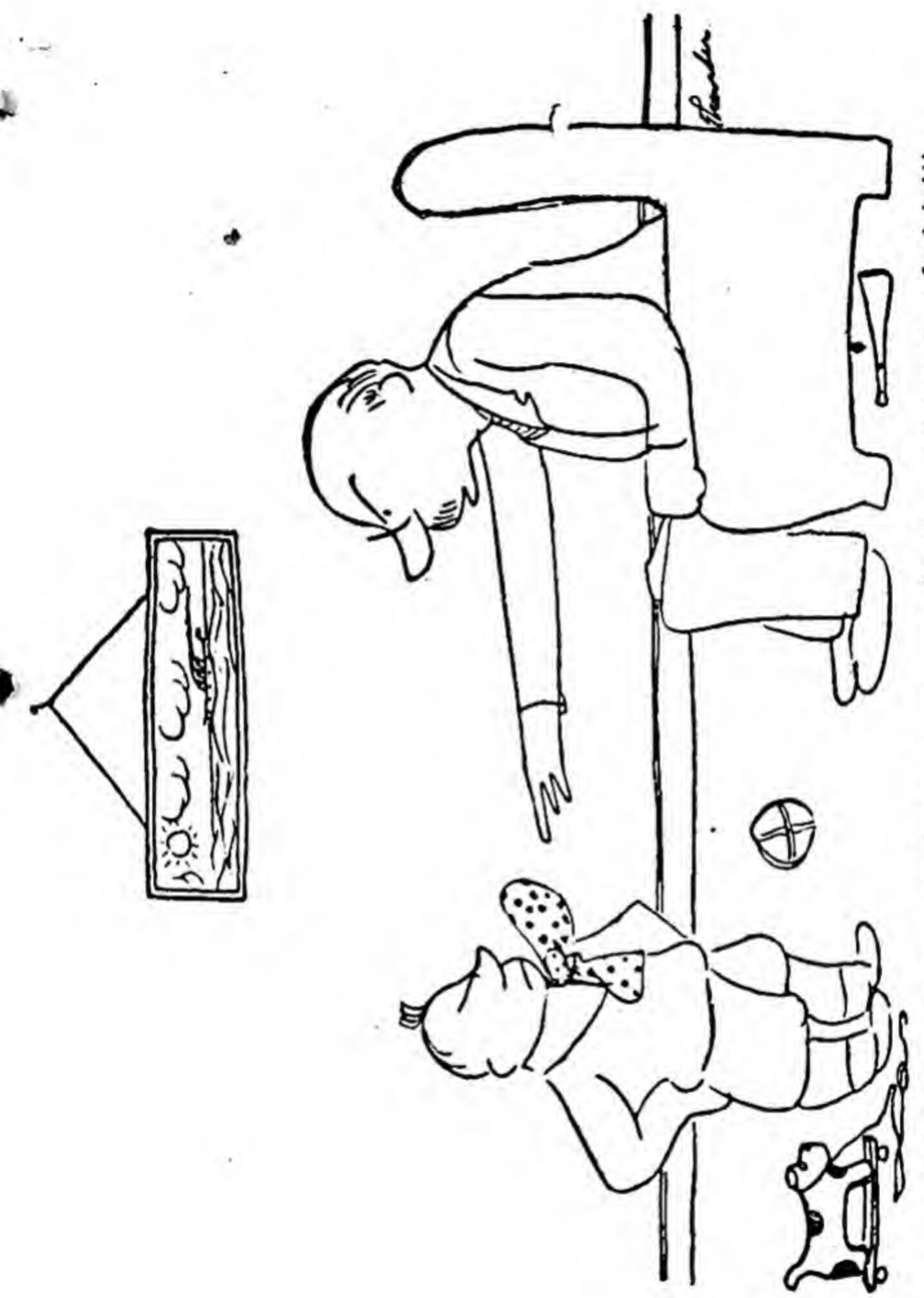




"Other end, Mr. Pemberton."



"Do you people mind if I take off some of these hot clothes?"



"I'll thank you to keep your mother's name out of this!"

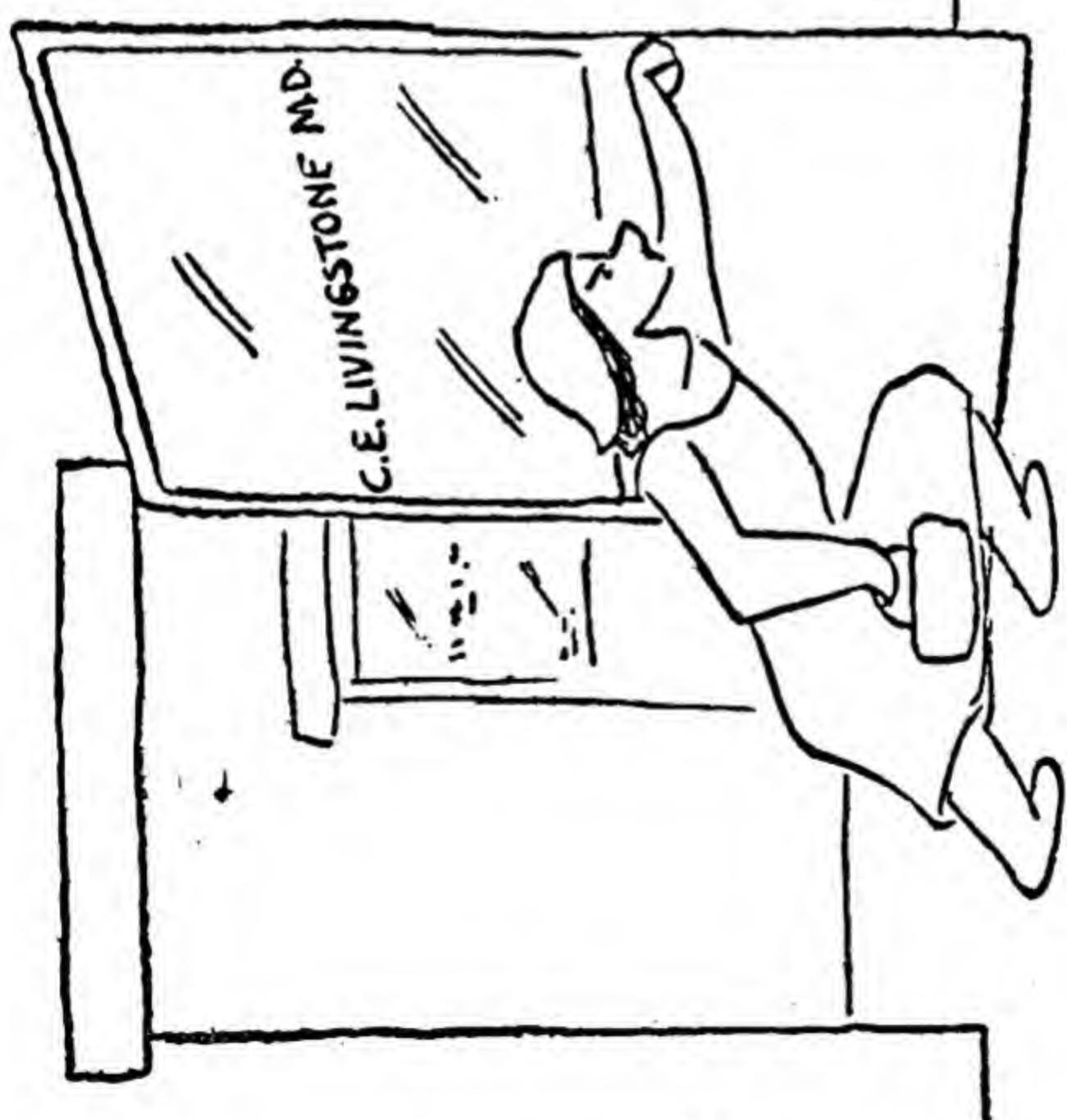
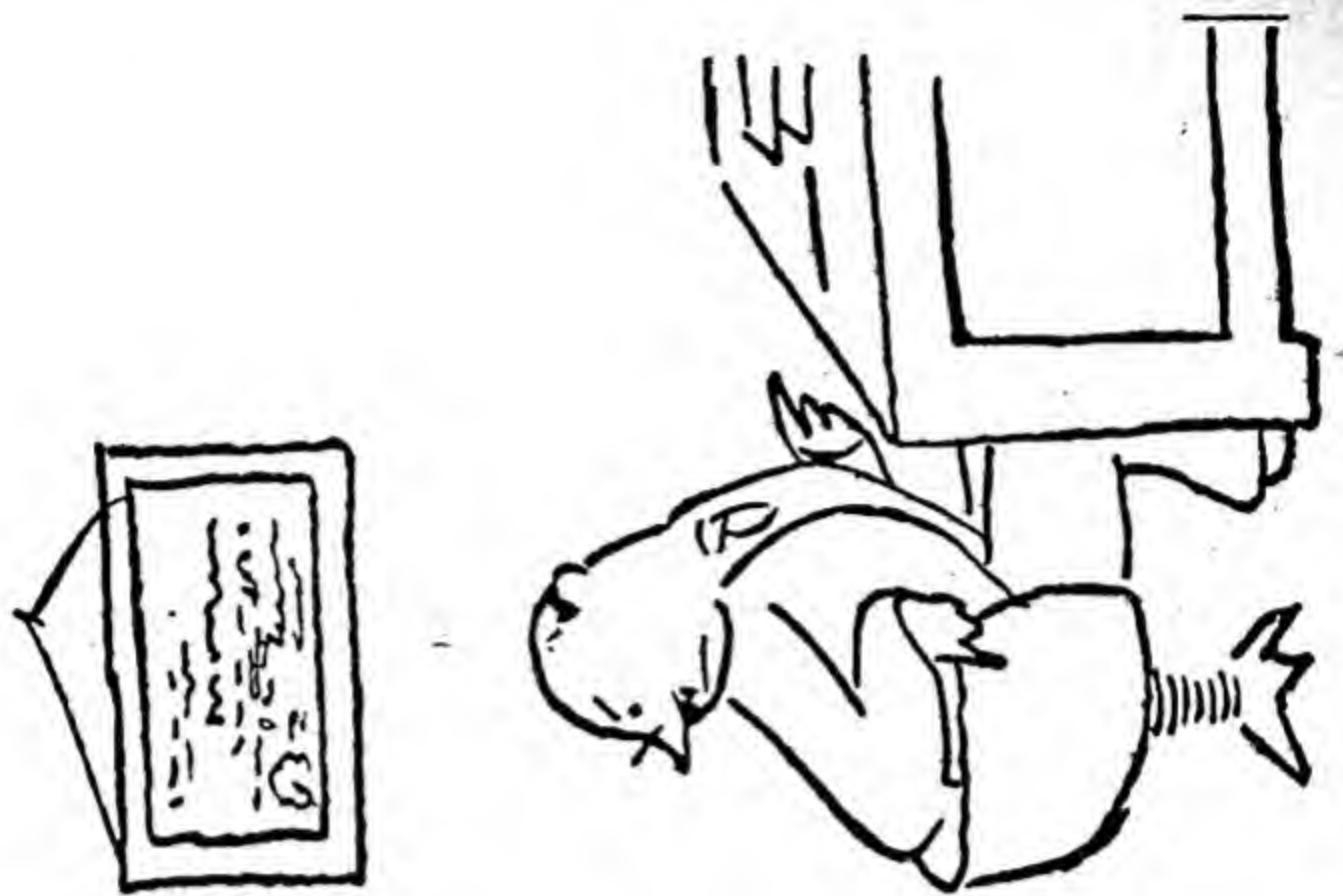


"I said the hounds of Spring are on Winter's traces—but
let it pass, let it pass!"

"Hello, darling—woolgathering?"

James Thurber





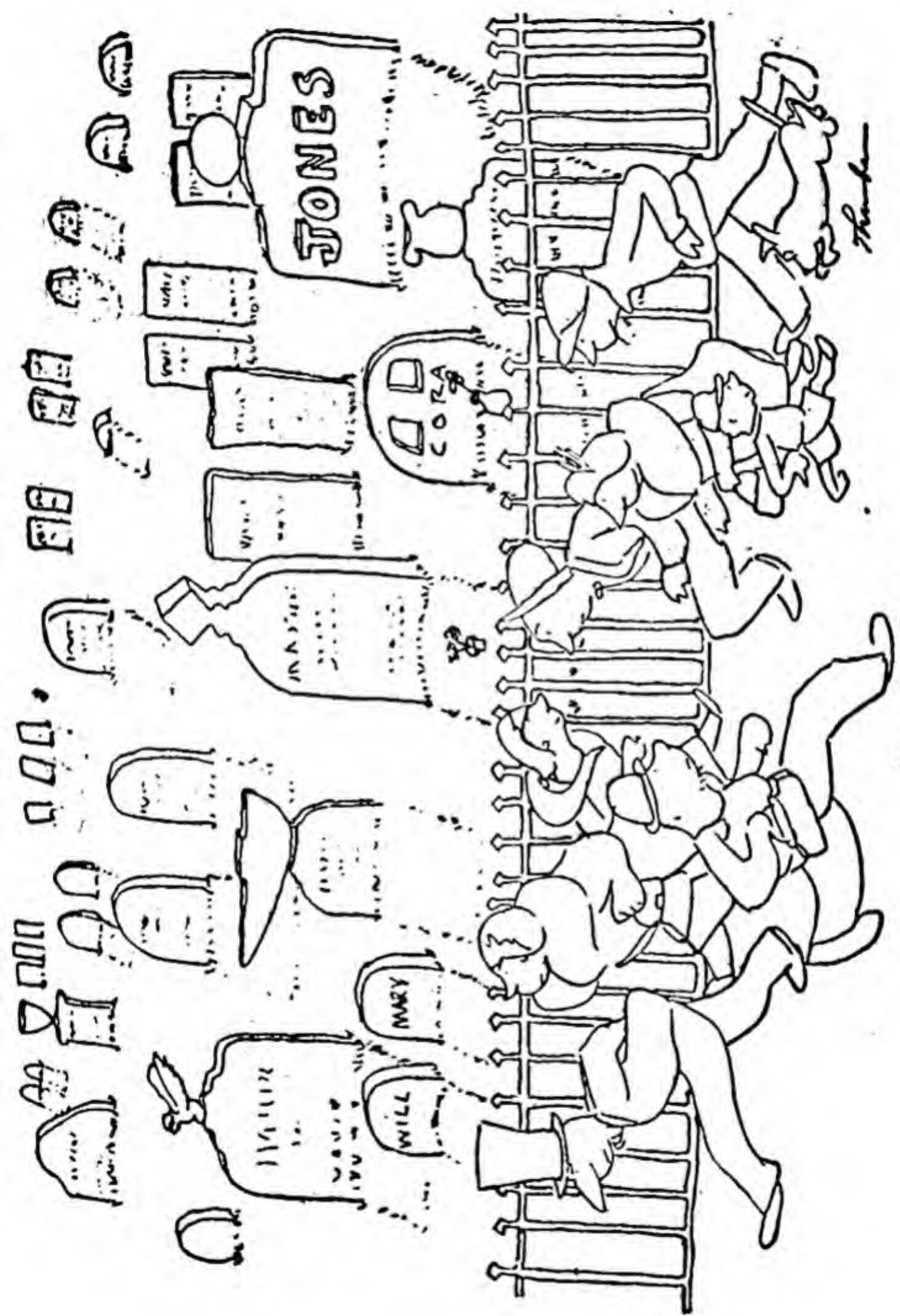
"Dr. Livingstone presume?"

James Thorne

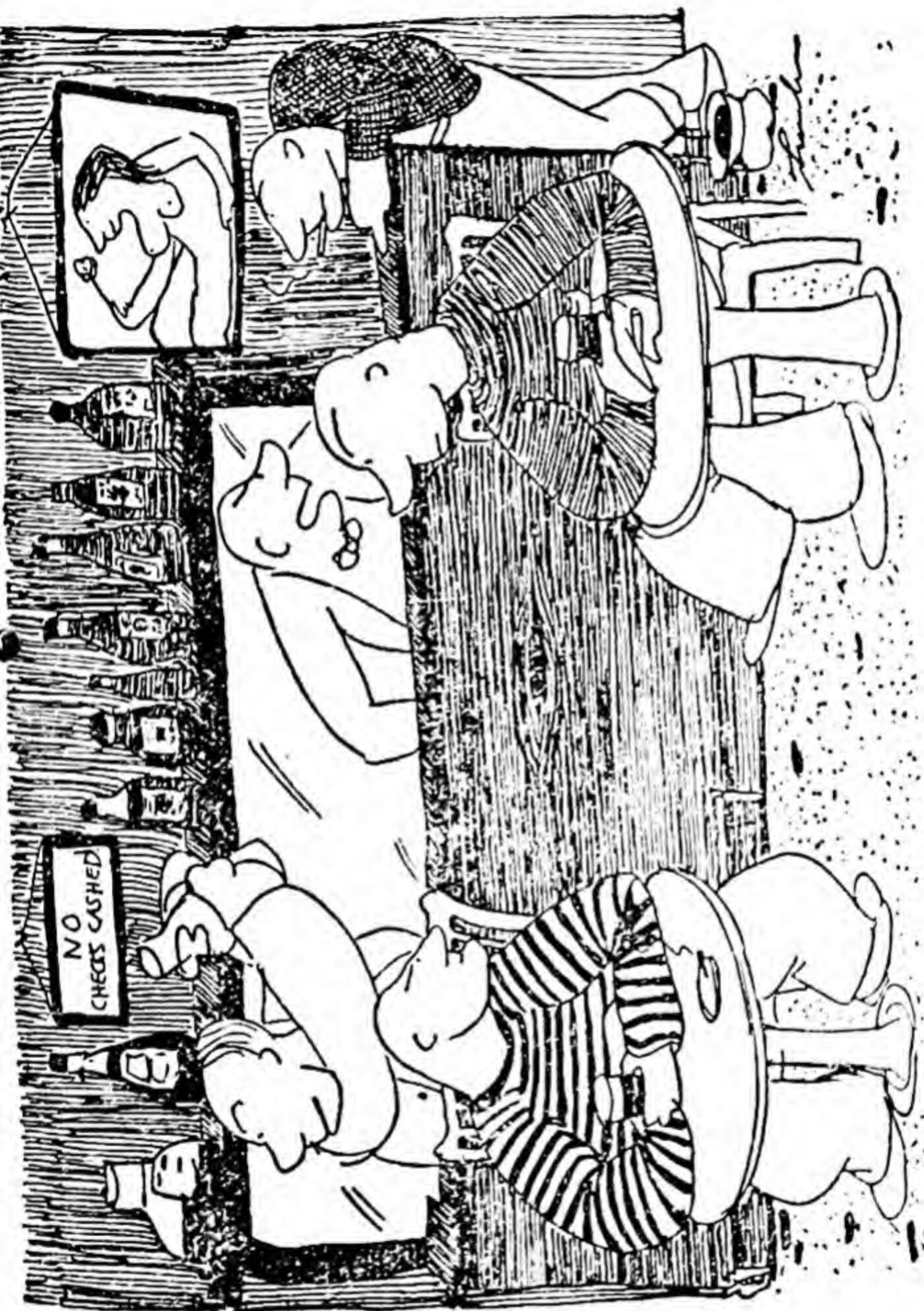


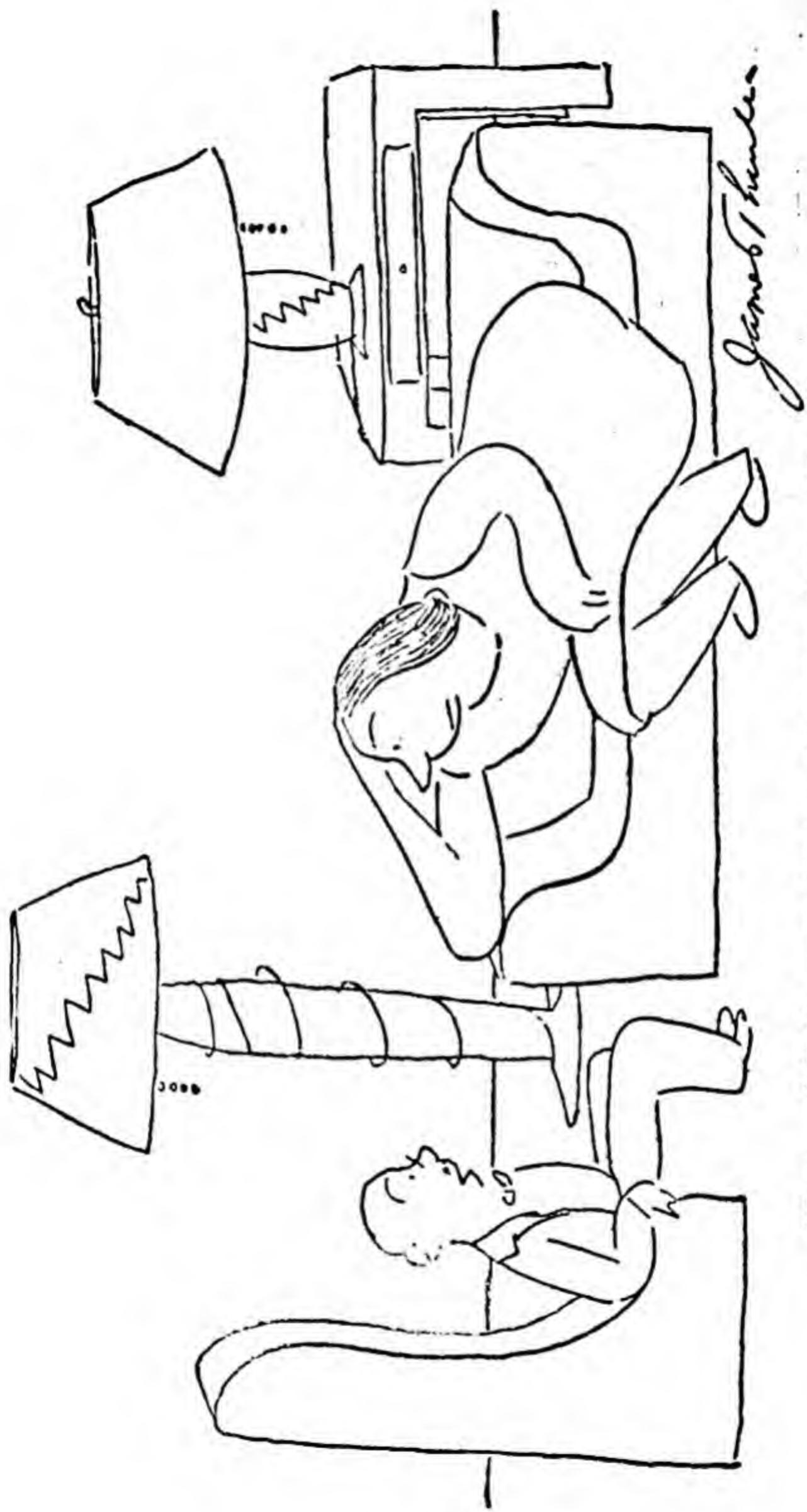
"I can't stand to have my pulse felt, Doctor!"

Destinations



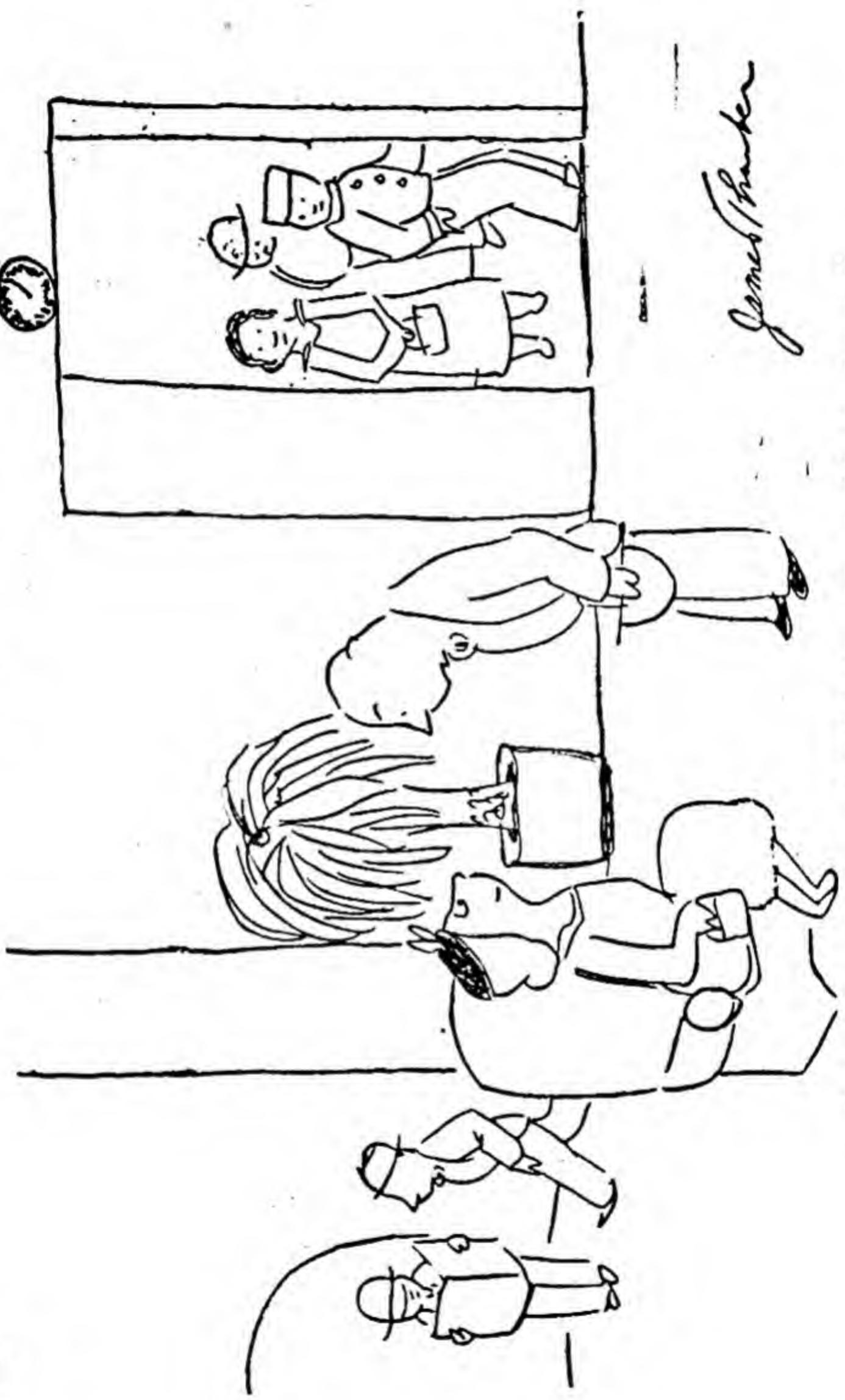
The Enemies

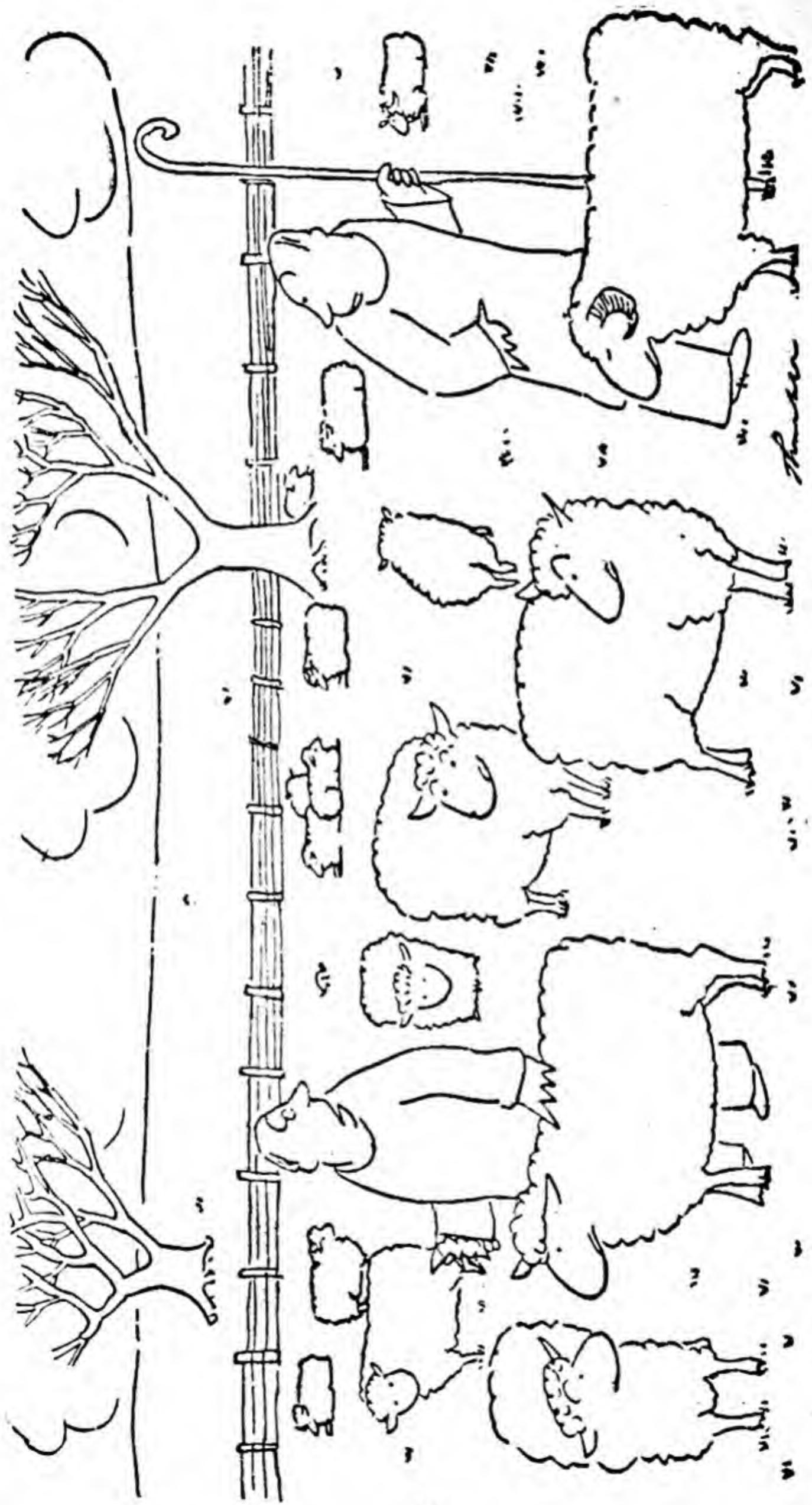




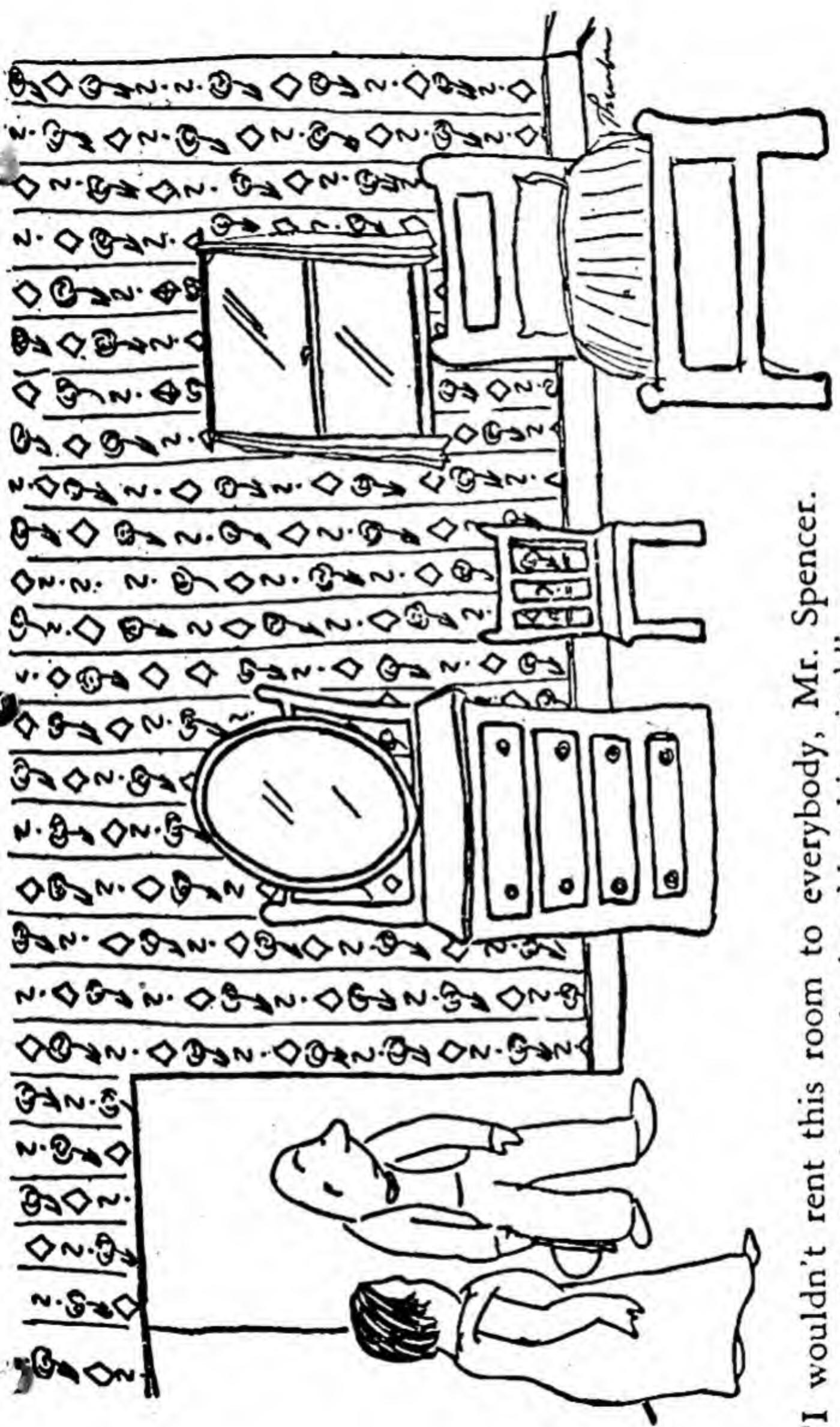
"Lots of little men have got somewhere—Napoleon
Dollfuss, Billy Rose."

"You wait here and I'll bring the etchings down."





"Would you step over here a second, Waldo? This one's bearing cotton."

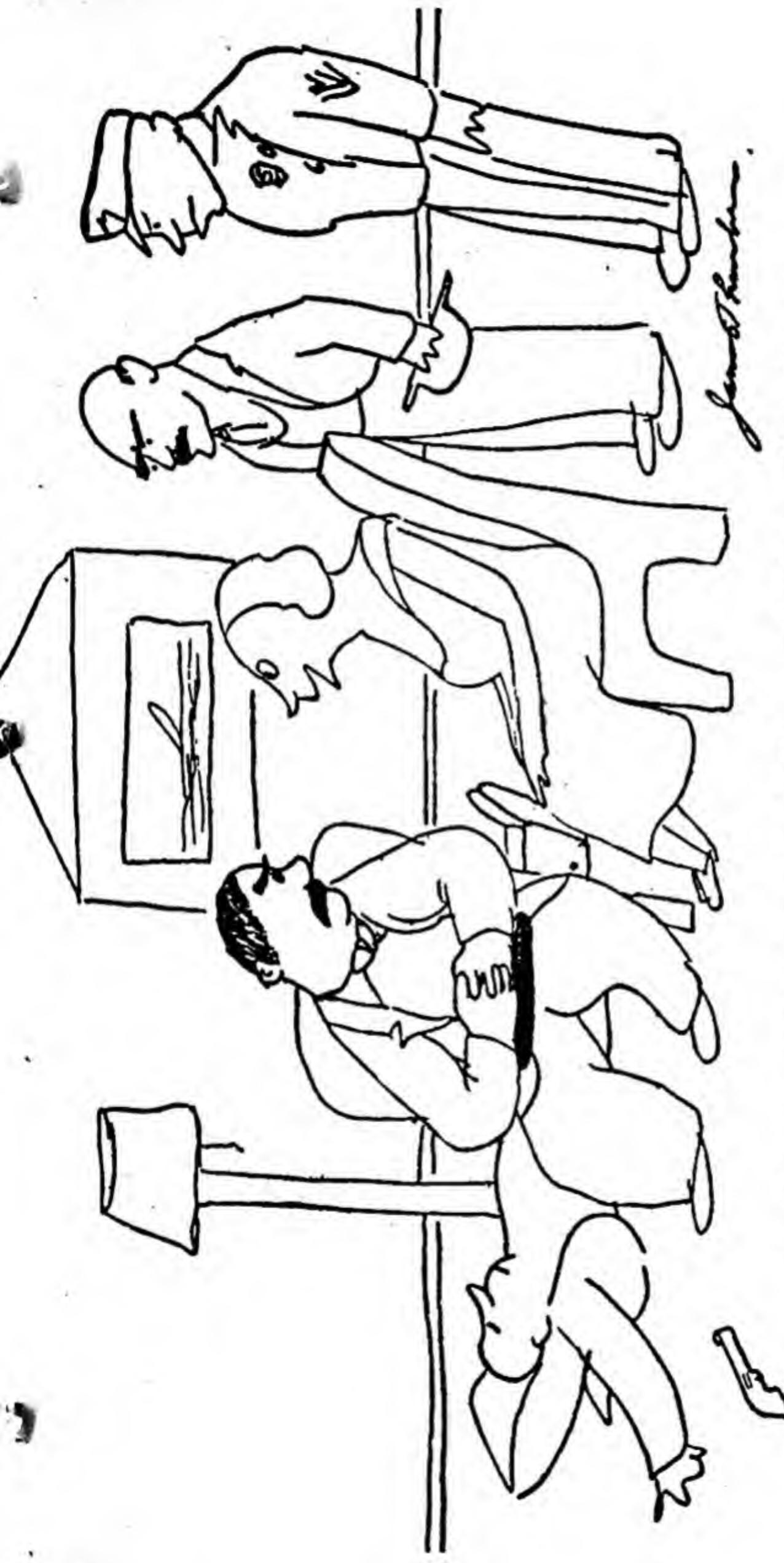


"I wouldn't rent this room to everybody, Mr. Spencer.
This is where my husband lost his mind."



Jane O'Hanlon

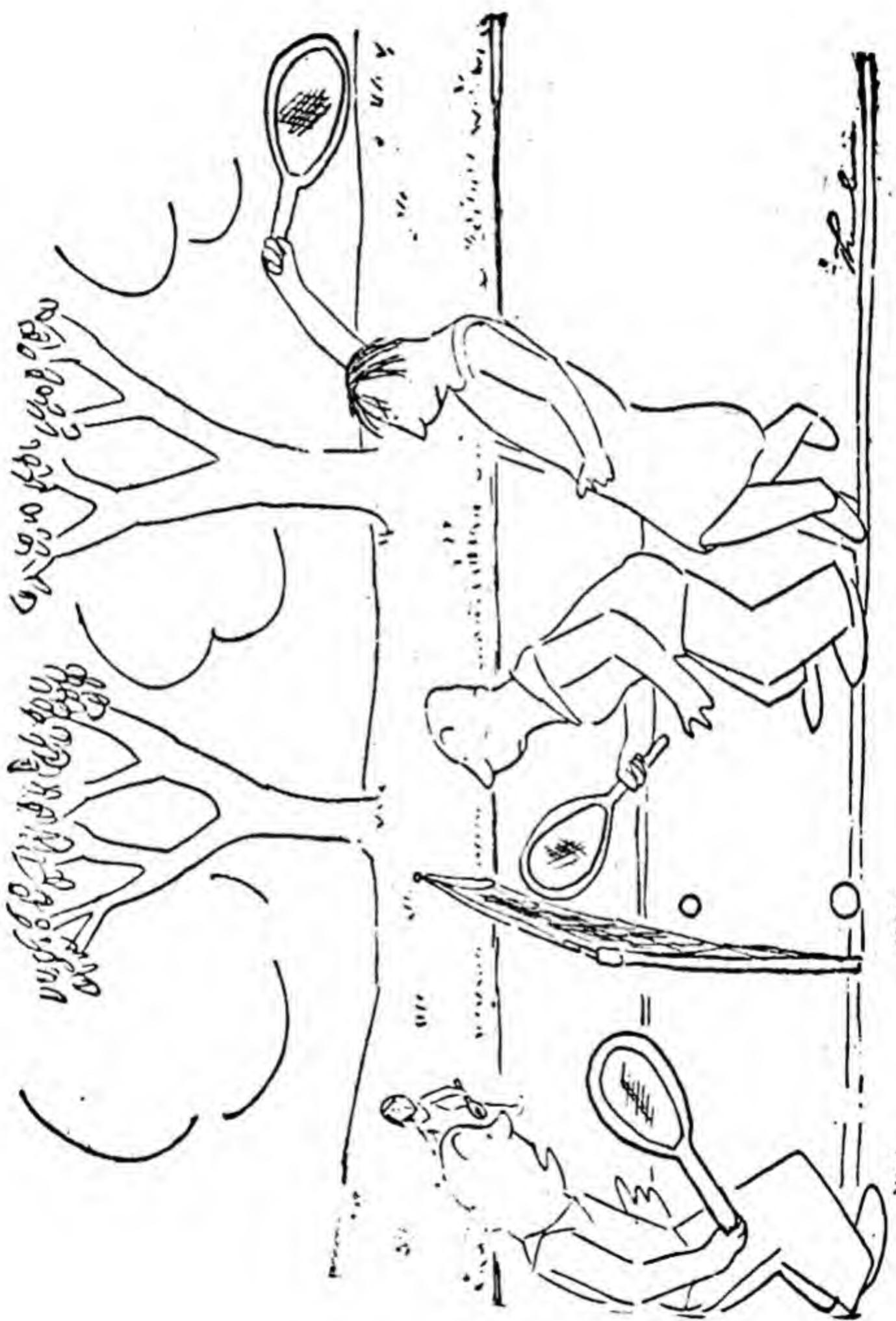
"She says she's burning with a hard, gemlike flame. It's
something they learned in school I think."



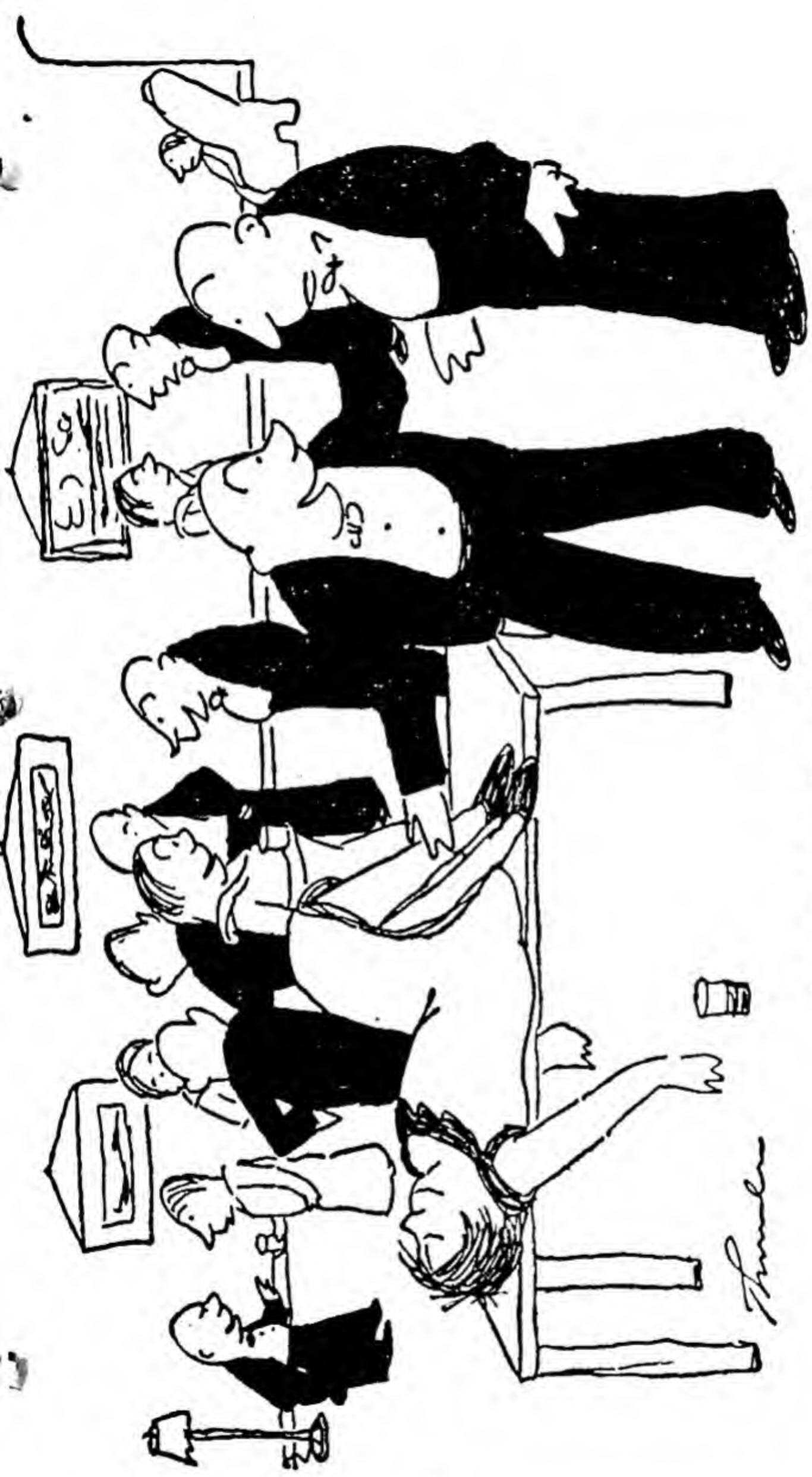
"Well, you see, the story *really* goes back to when I was
a teensy-weensy little girl."

"Look out, Harry!"

"... said."

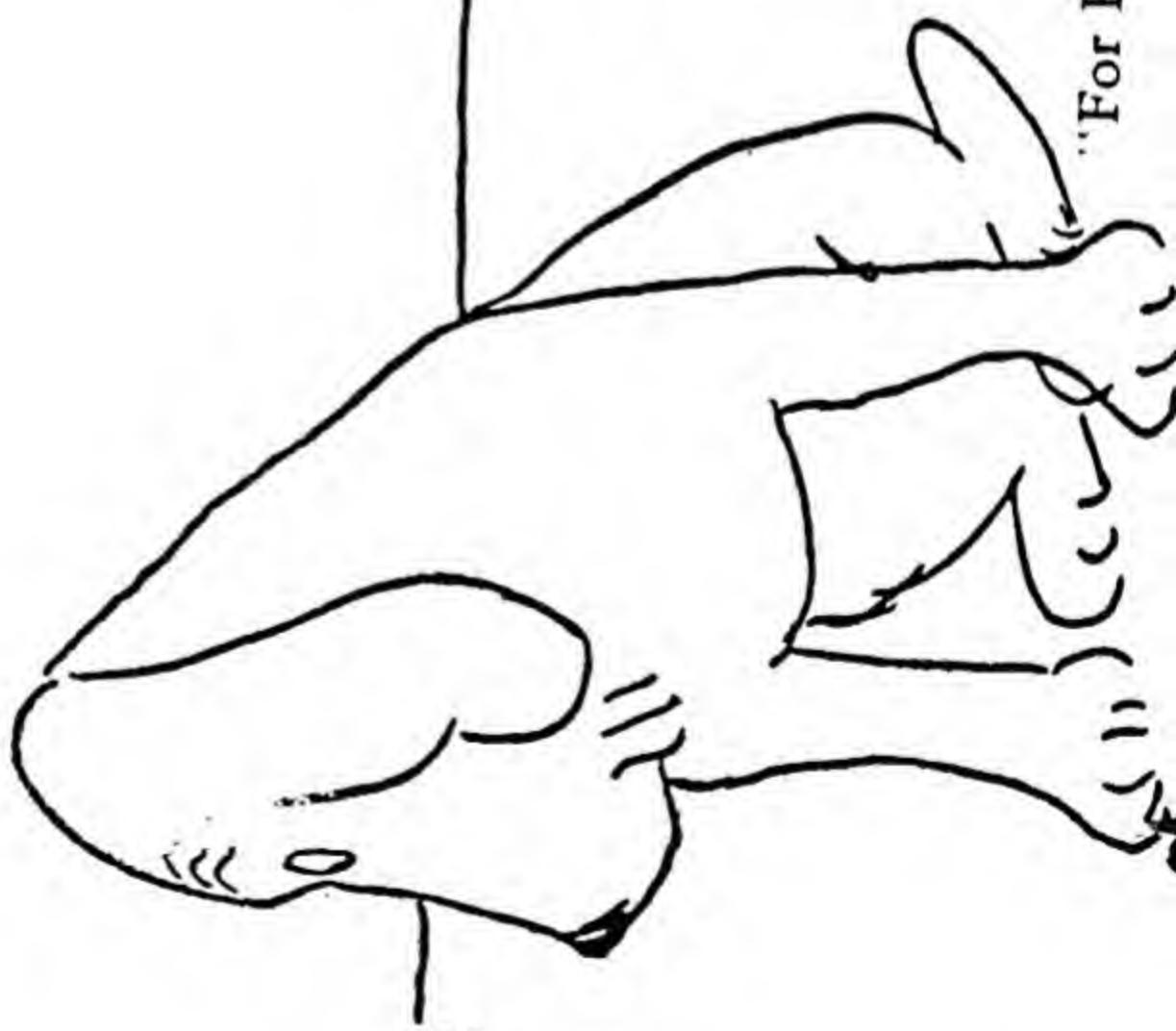
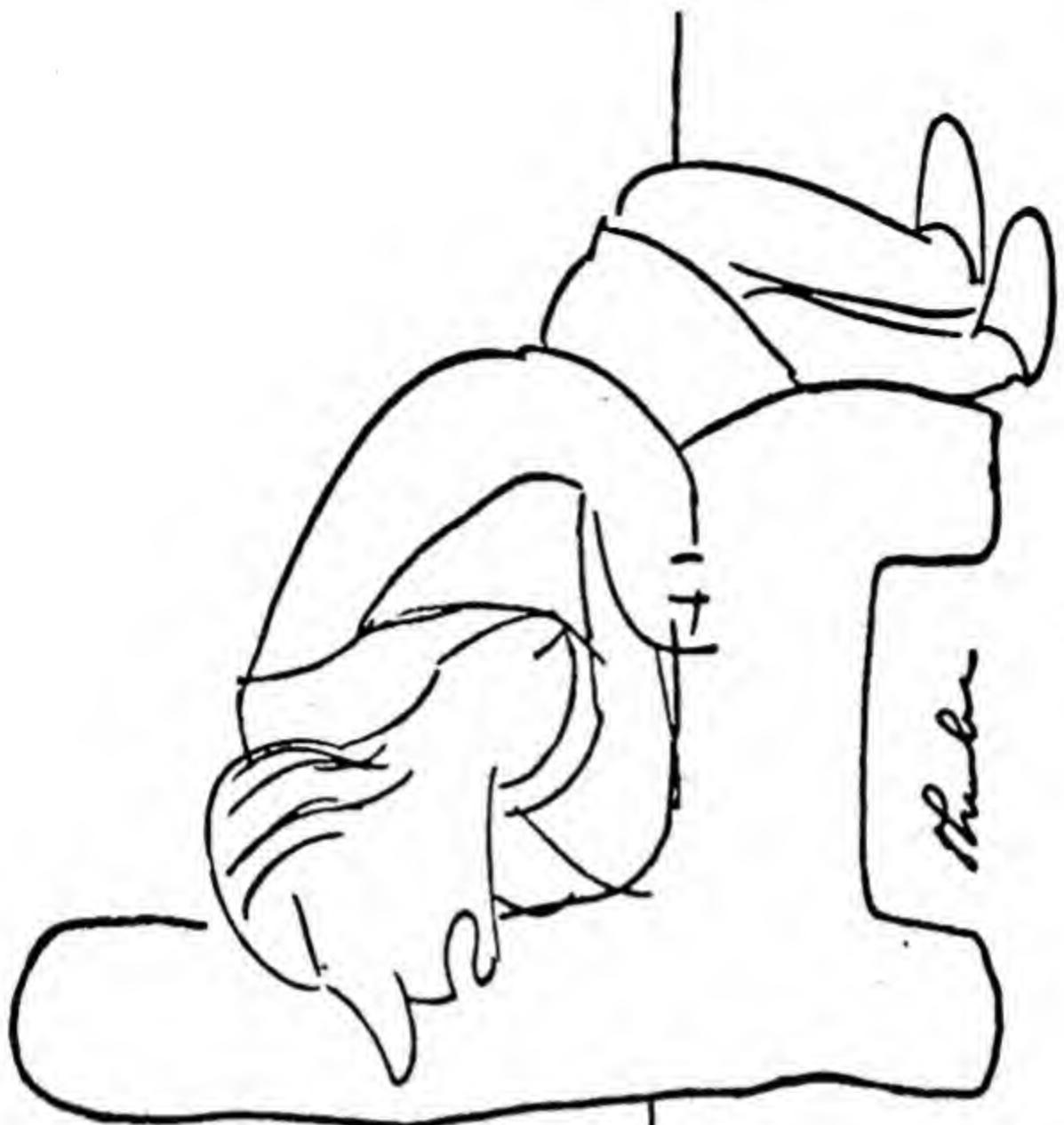


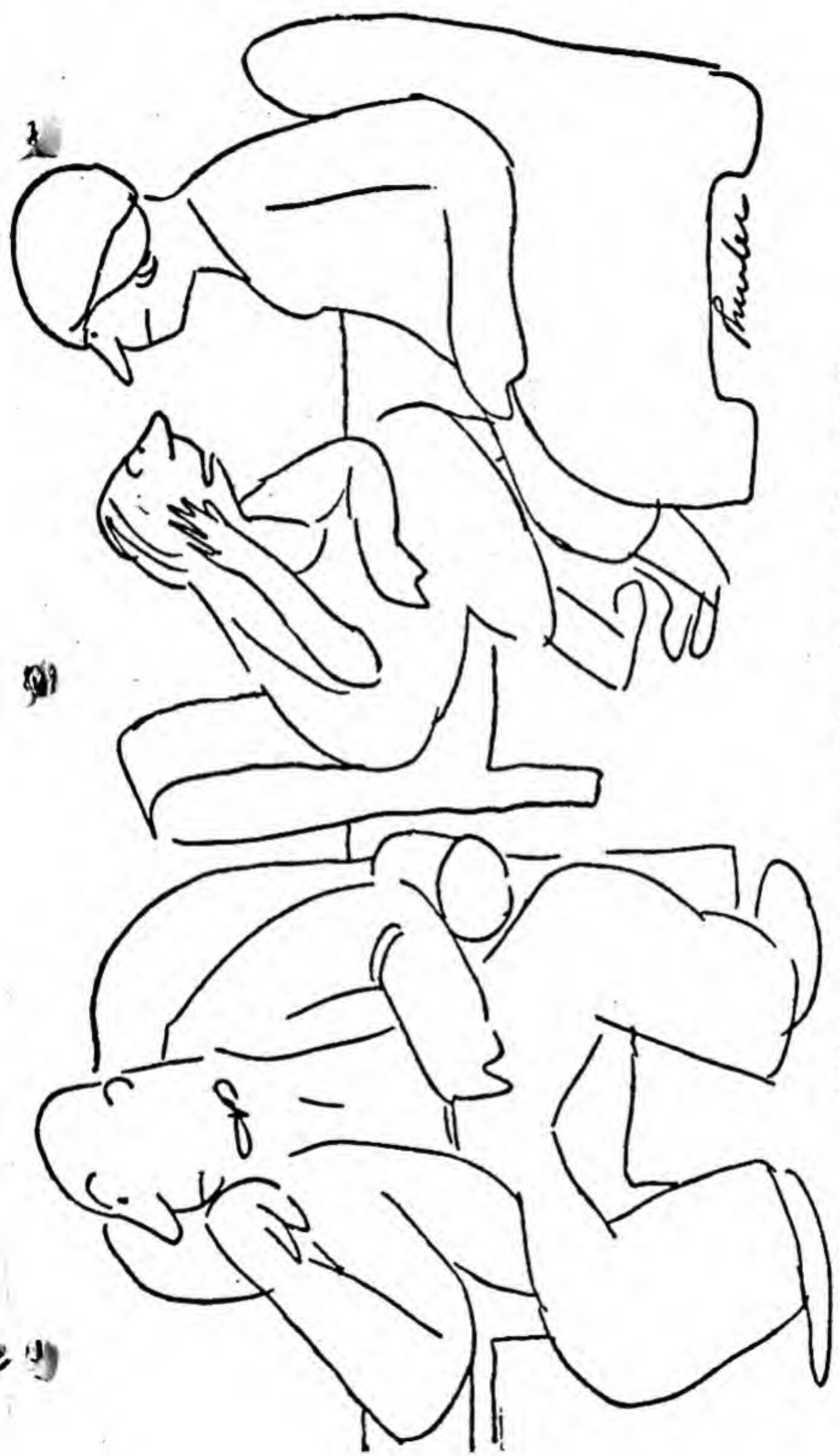
"And this is the little woman."



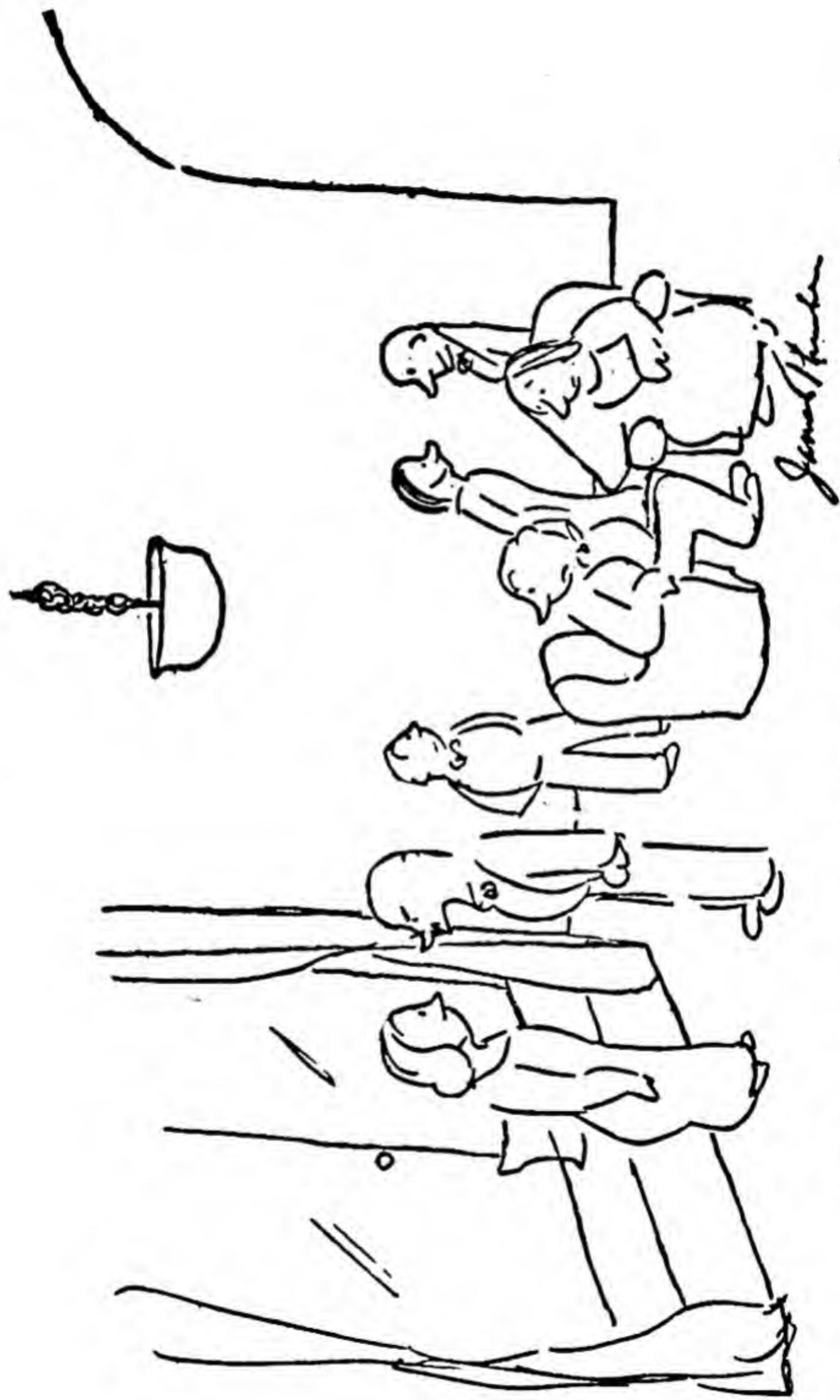
"For Heaven's sake, why don't you go outdoors and trace

"

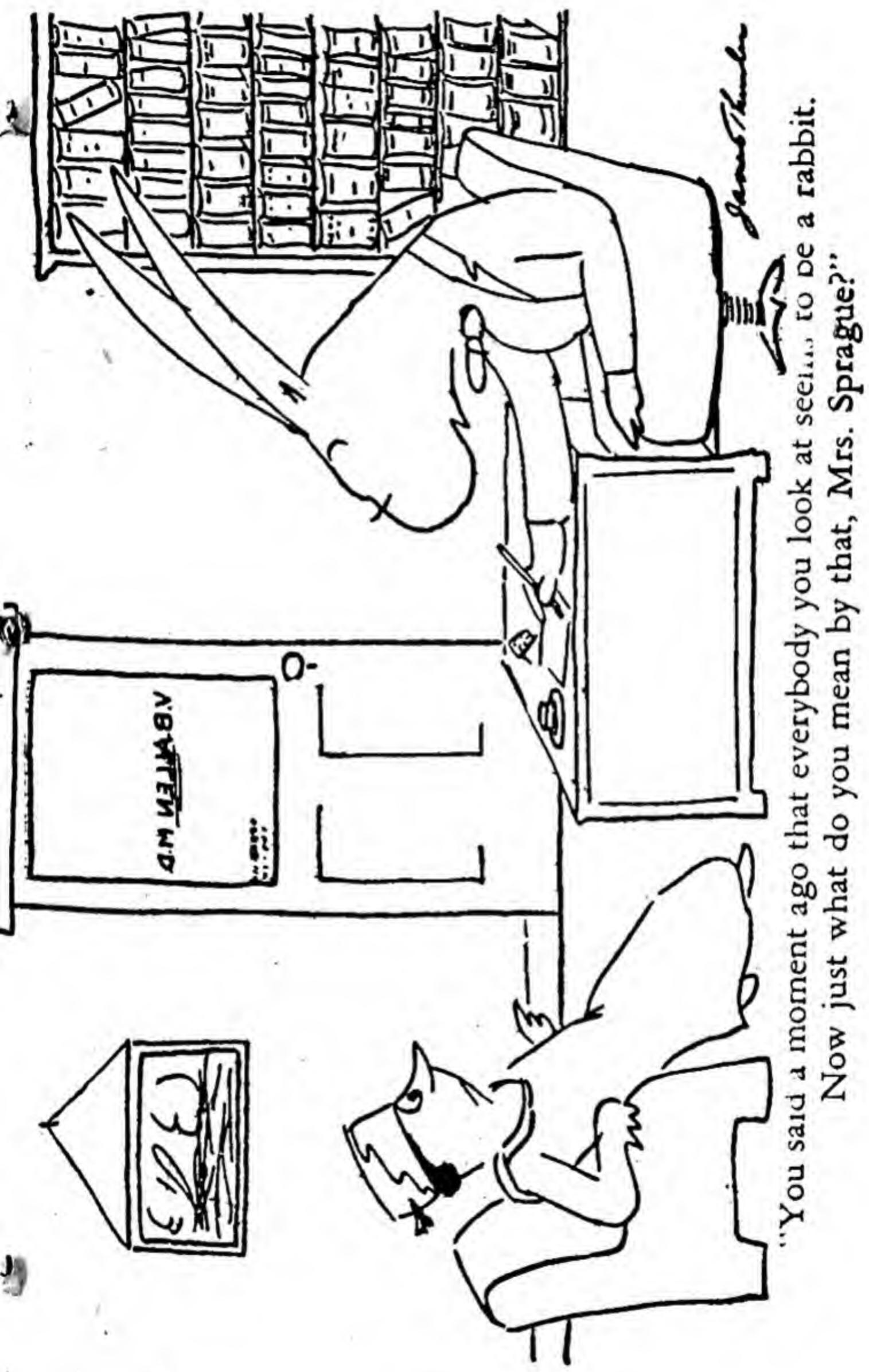




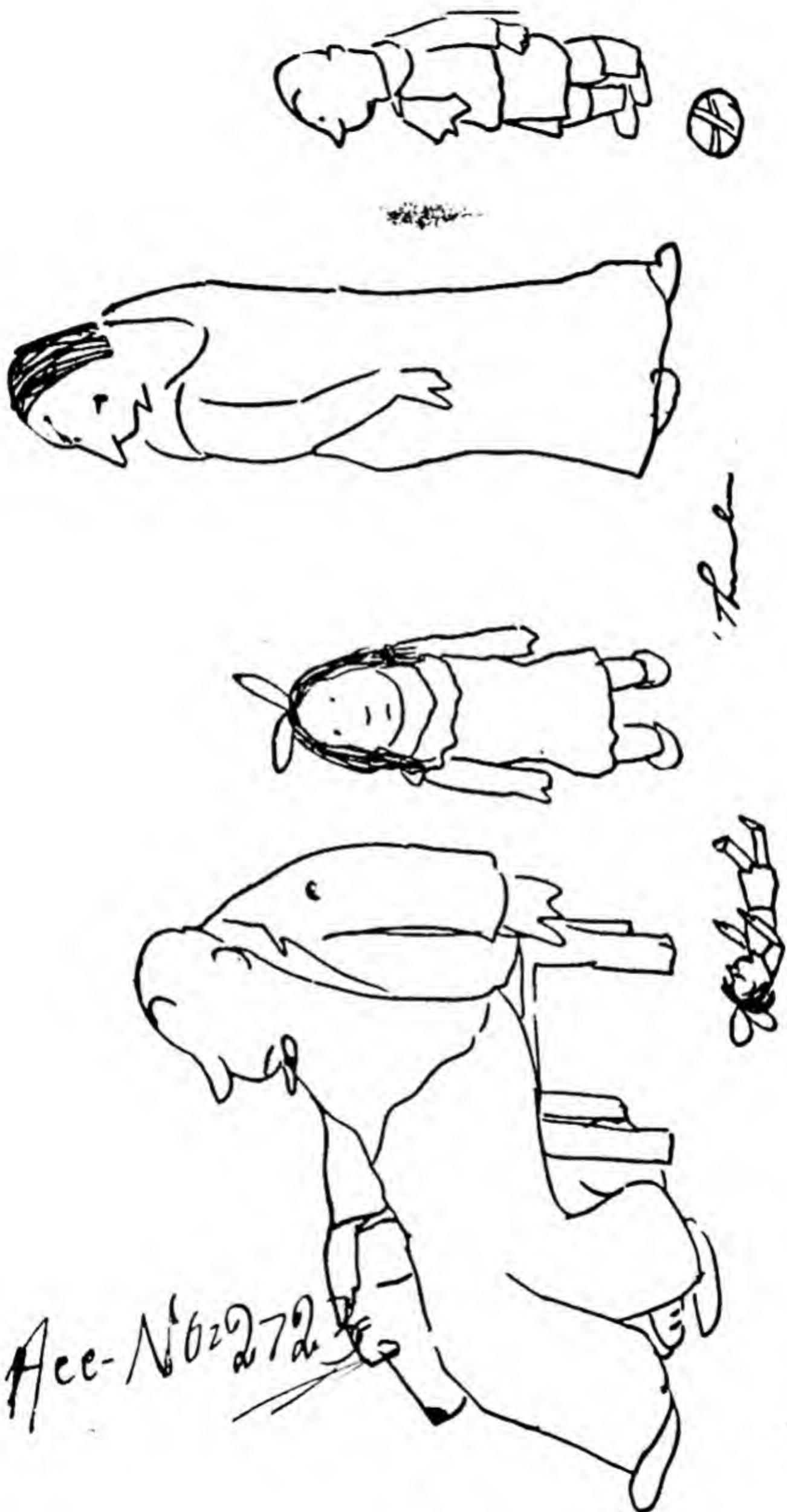
"He's given up everything for a whole year."



"Will you please cease calling me Sweetie Pie in public?"

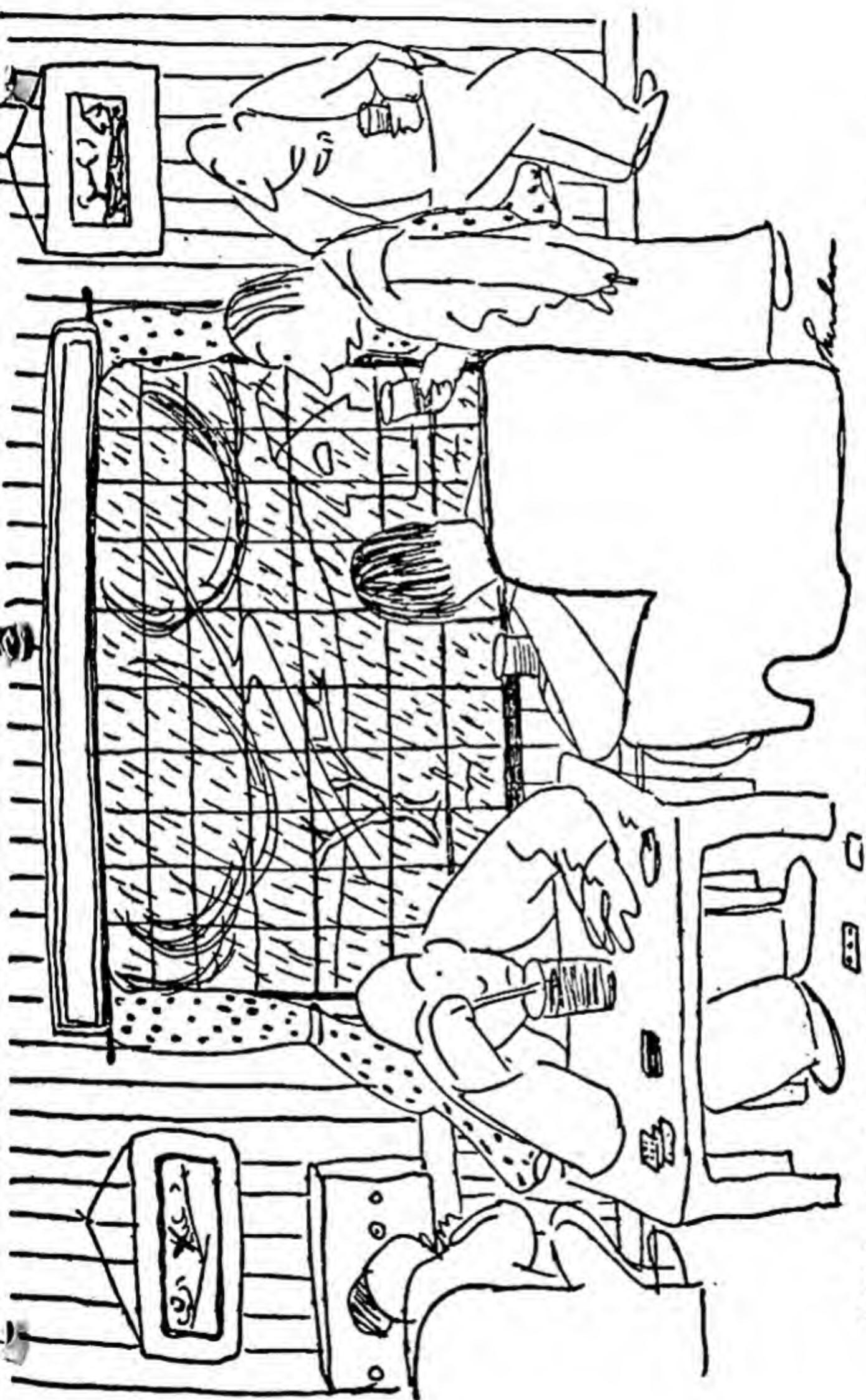


"You said a moment ago that everybody you look at seems to be a rabbit.
Now just what do you mean by that, Mrs. Sprague?"

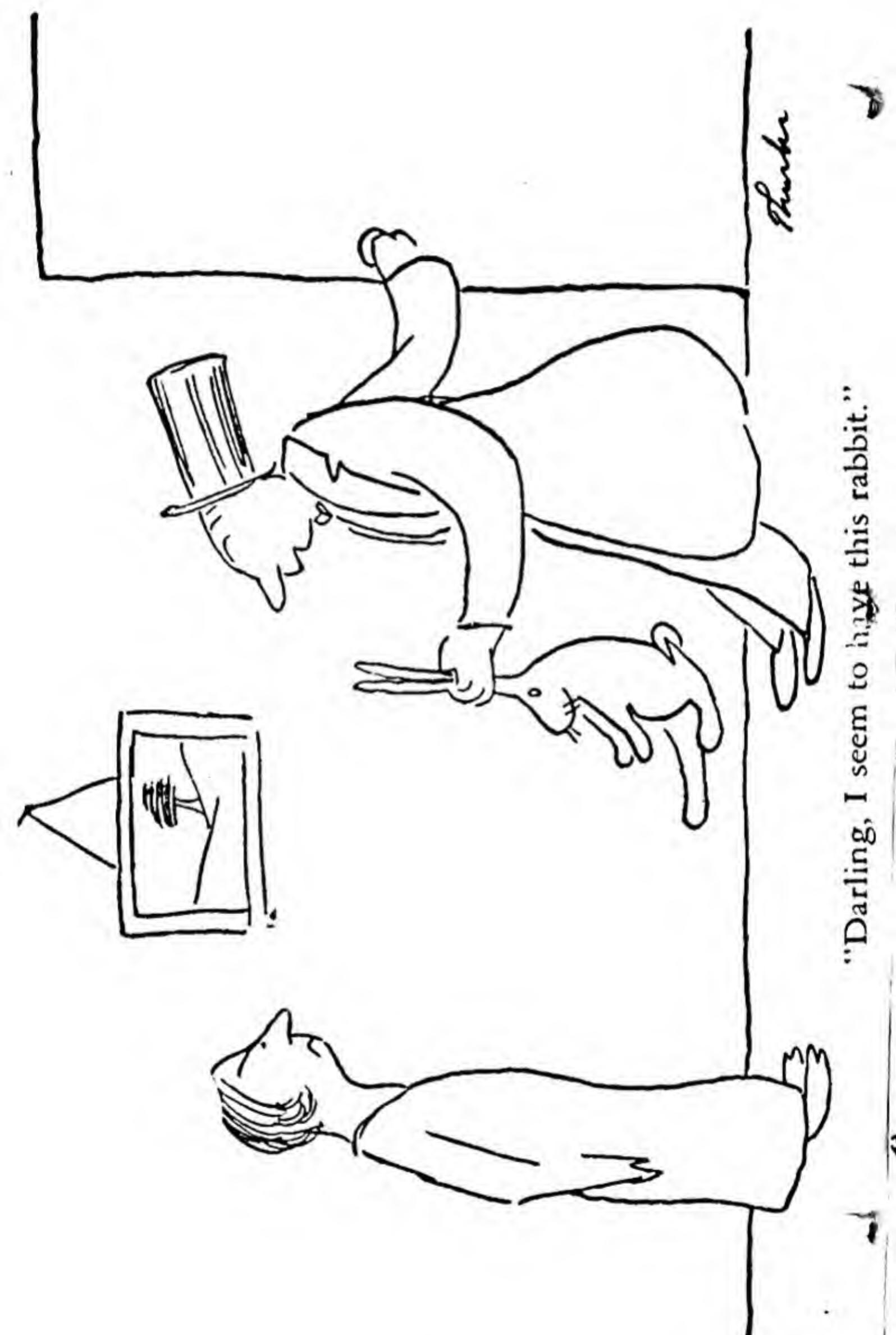


Ace-N^o272

"Well, I'm disenchanted, too. We're all disenchanted."



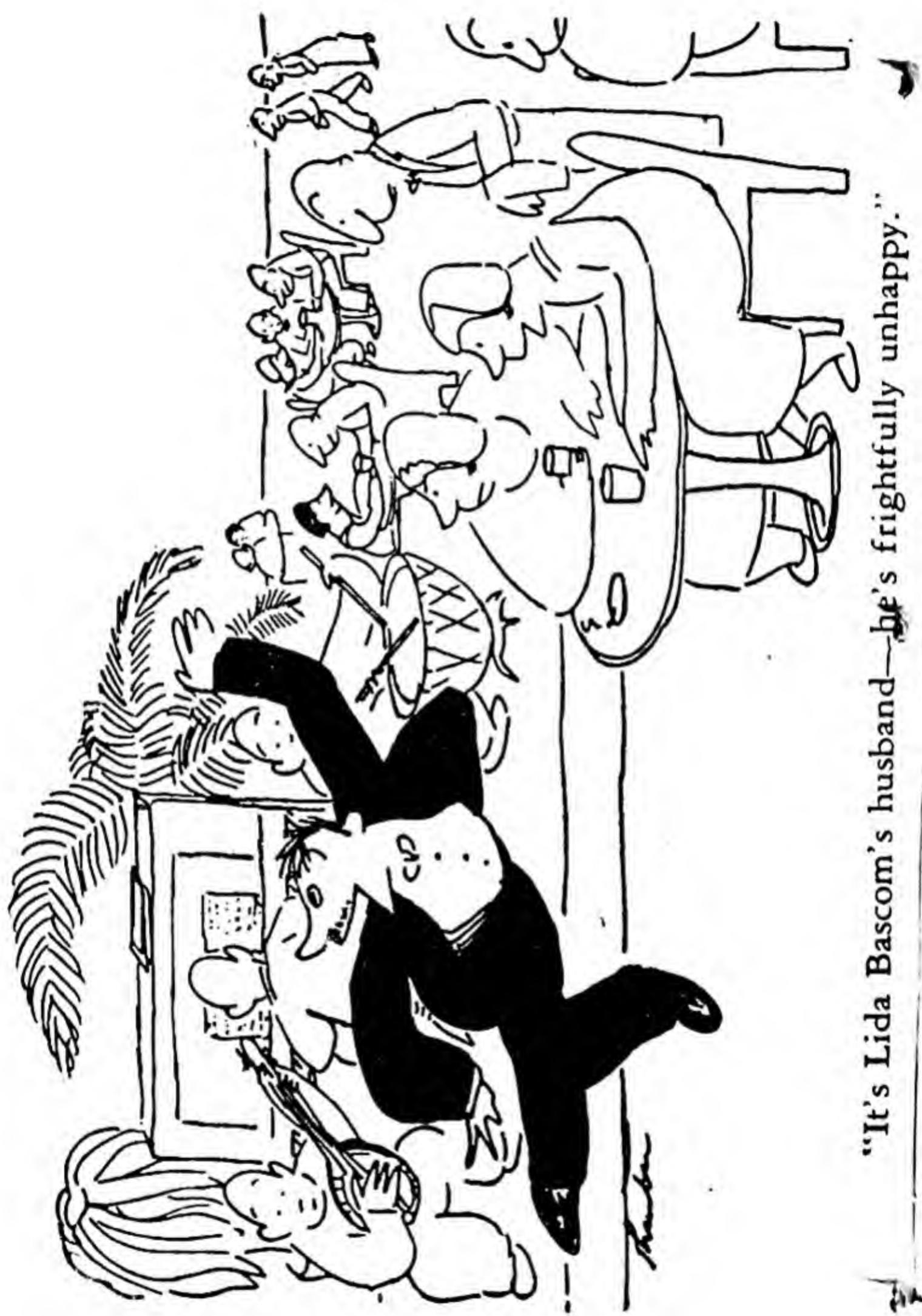
"This is like that awful afternoon we telephoned Mencken."



"Darling, I seem to ~~have~~ this rabbit."

"I don't know them either, dear, but there may be some very simple explanation."

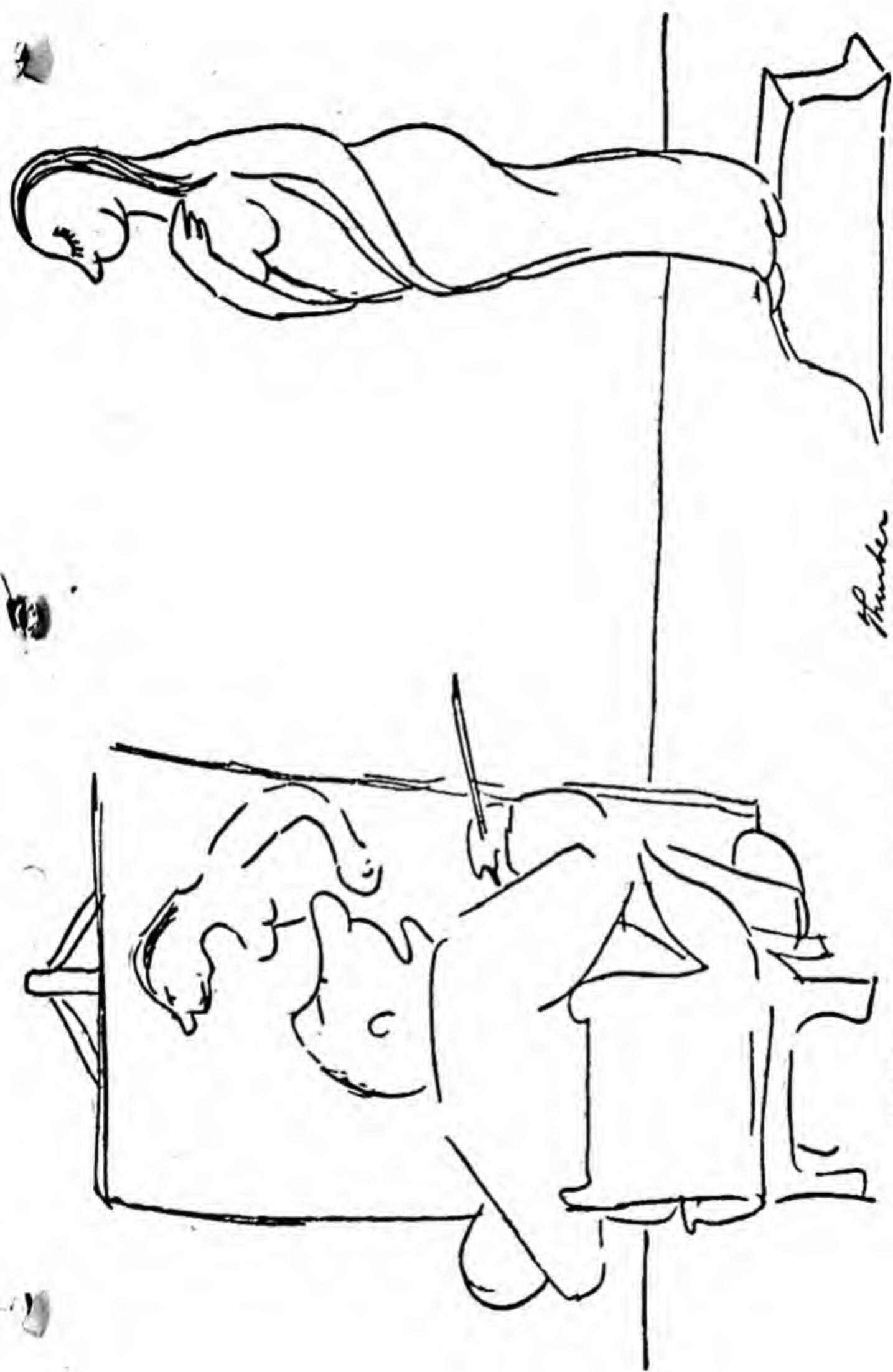


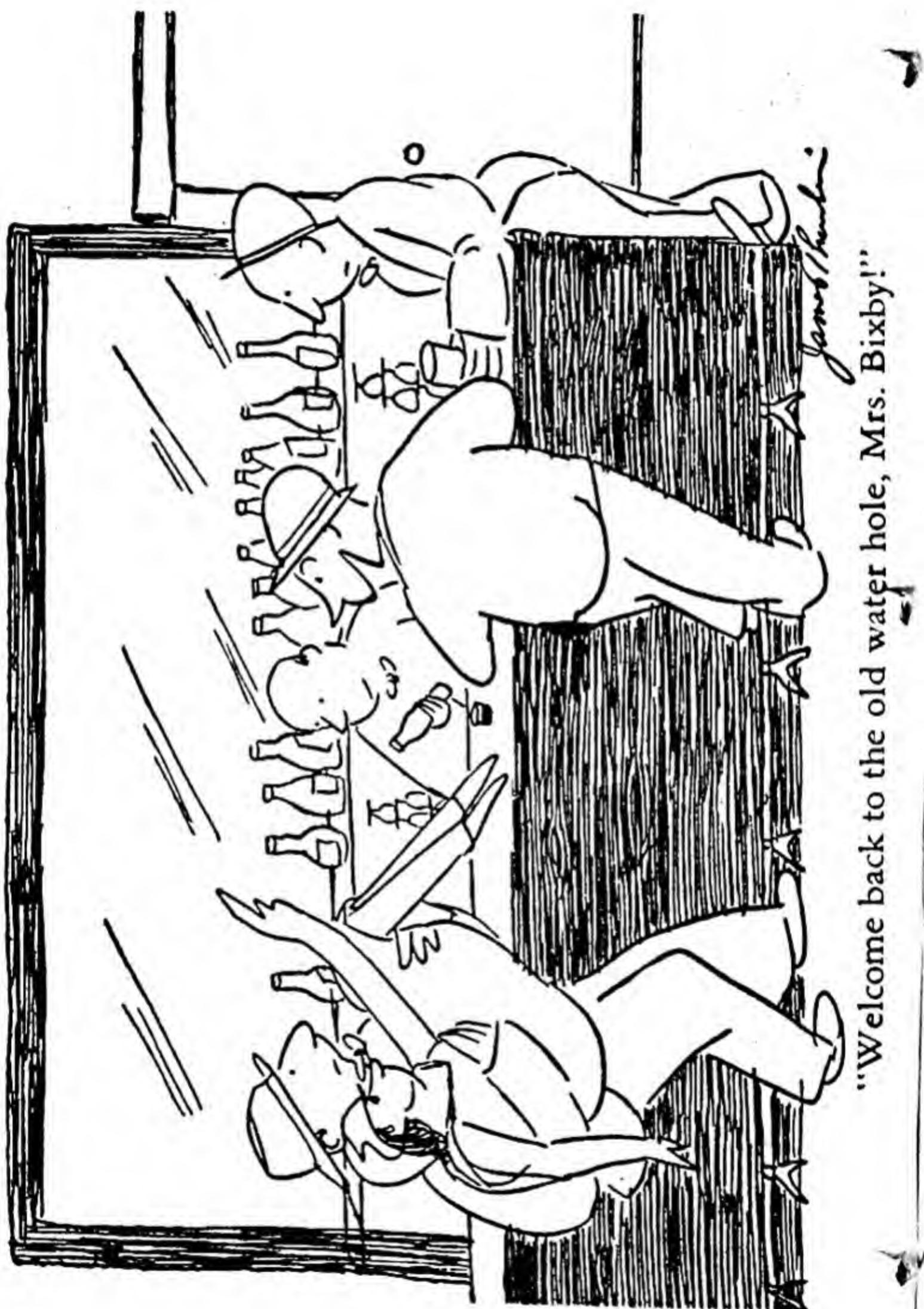


"It's Lida Bascom's husband—he's frightfully unhappy."

"What's come over you since Friday, Miss Schemke?"

Thunder

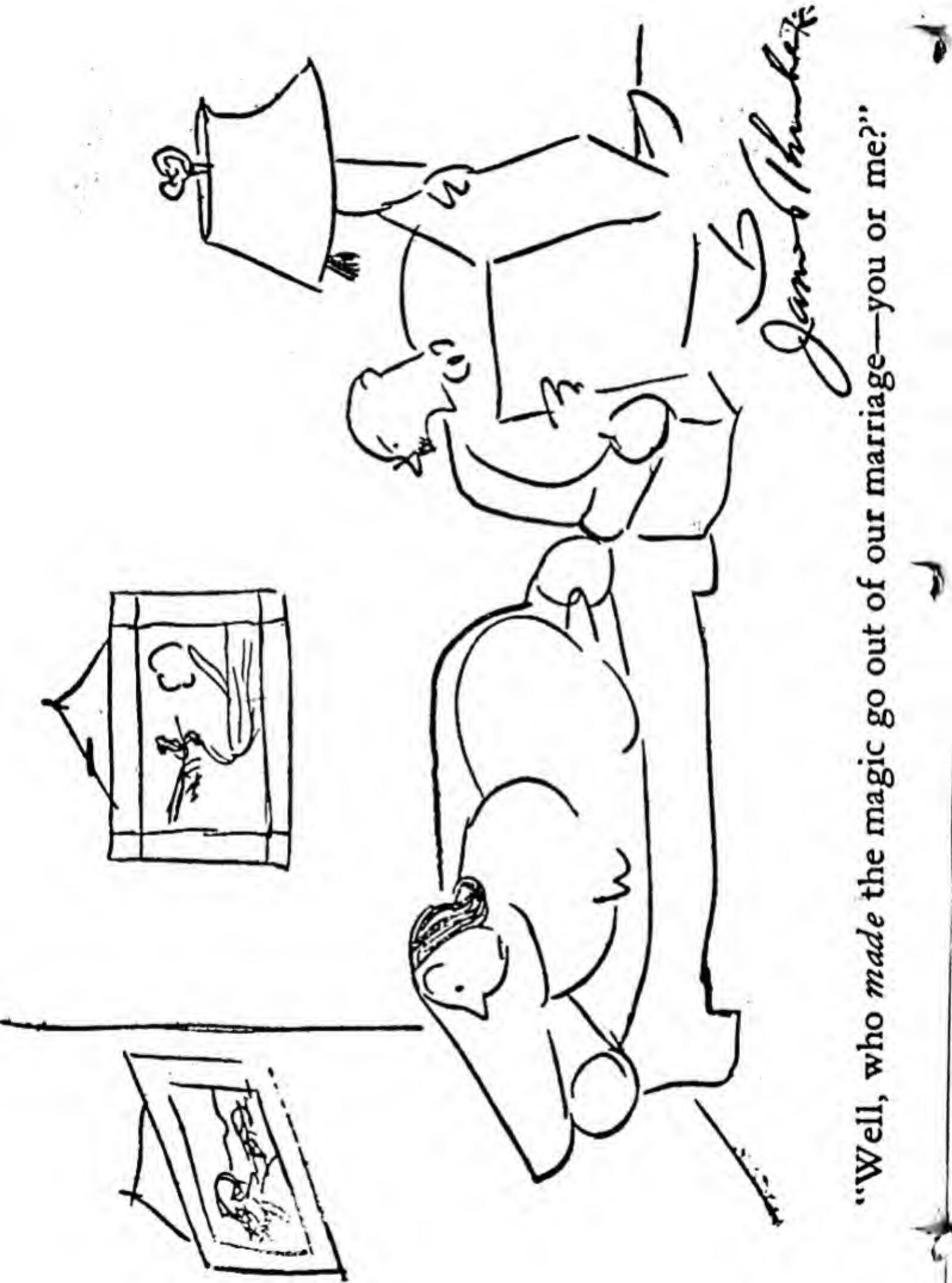




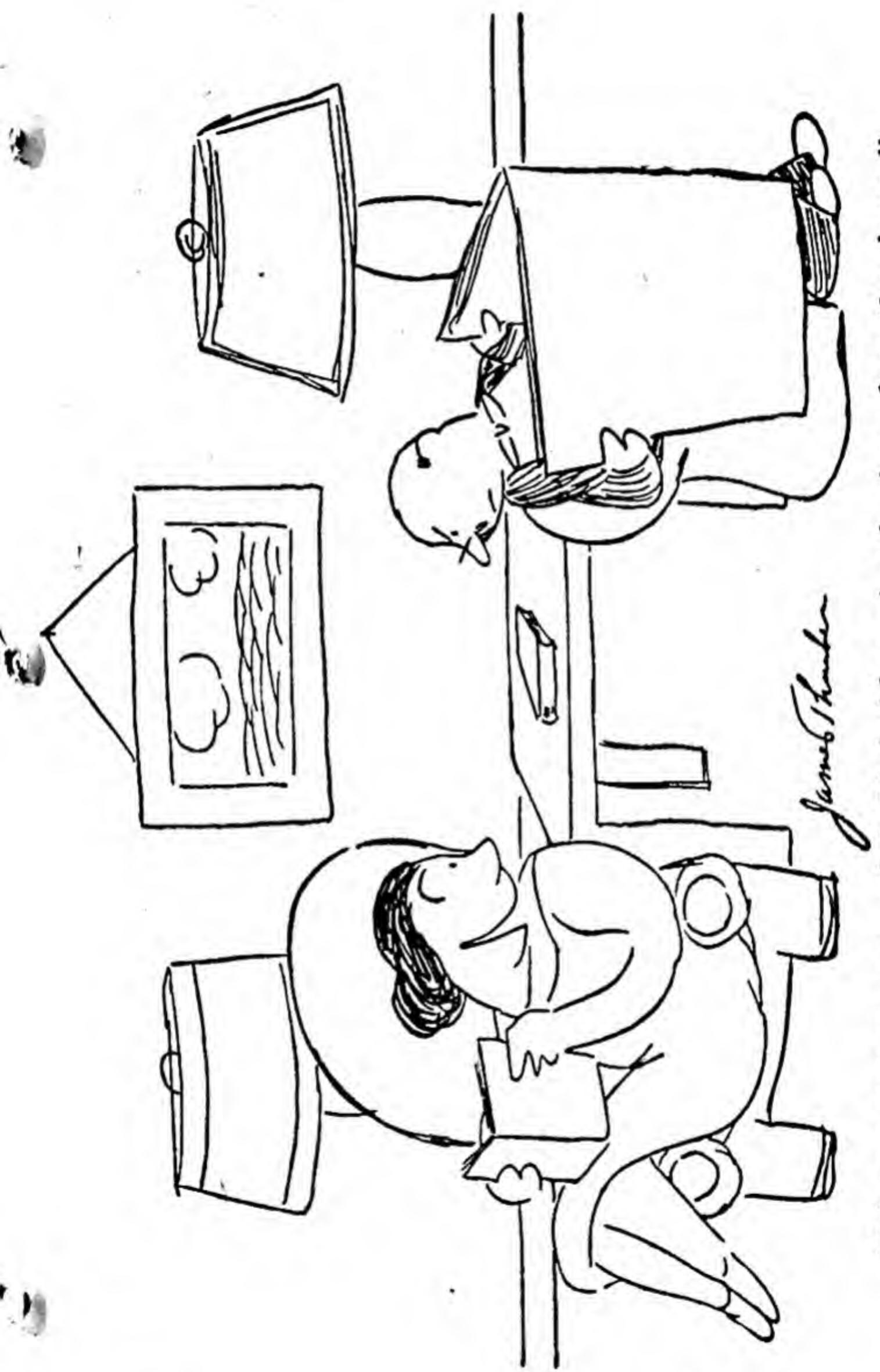
"Welcome back to the old water hole, Mrs. Bixby!"



"And this is Tom Weatherby, an old beau of your mother's.
He never got to first base."

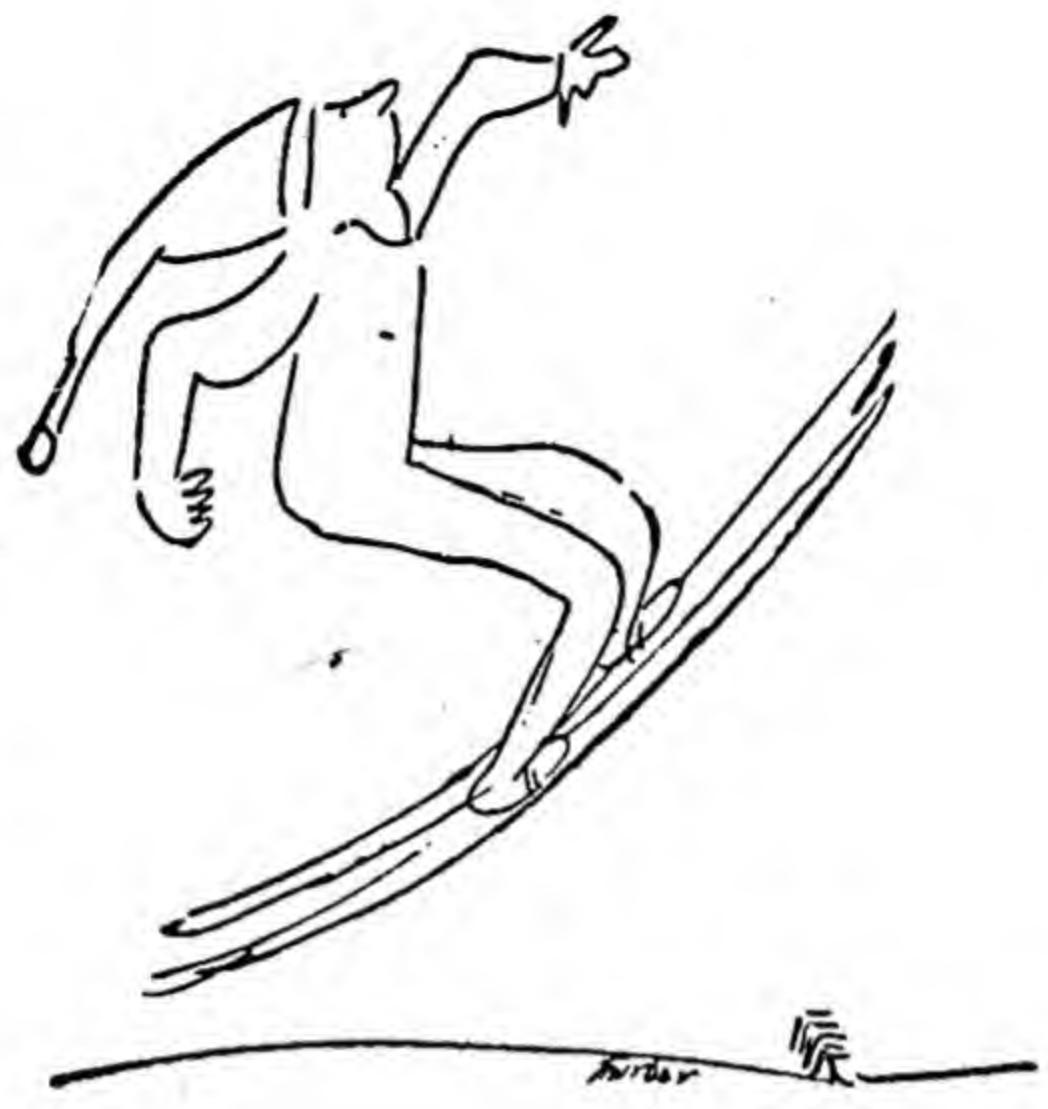


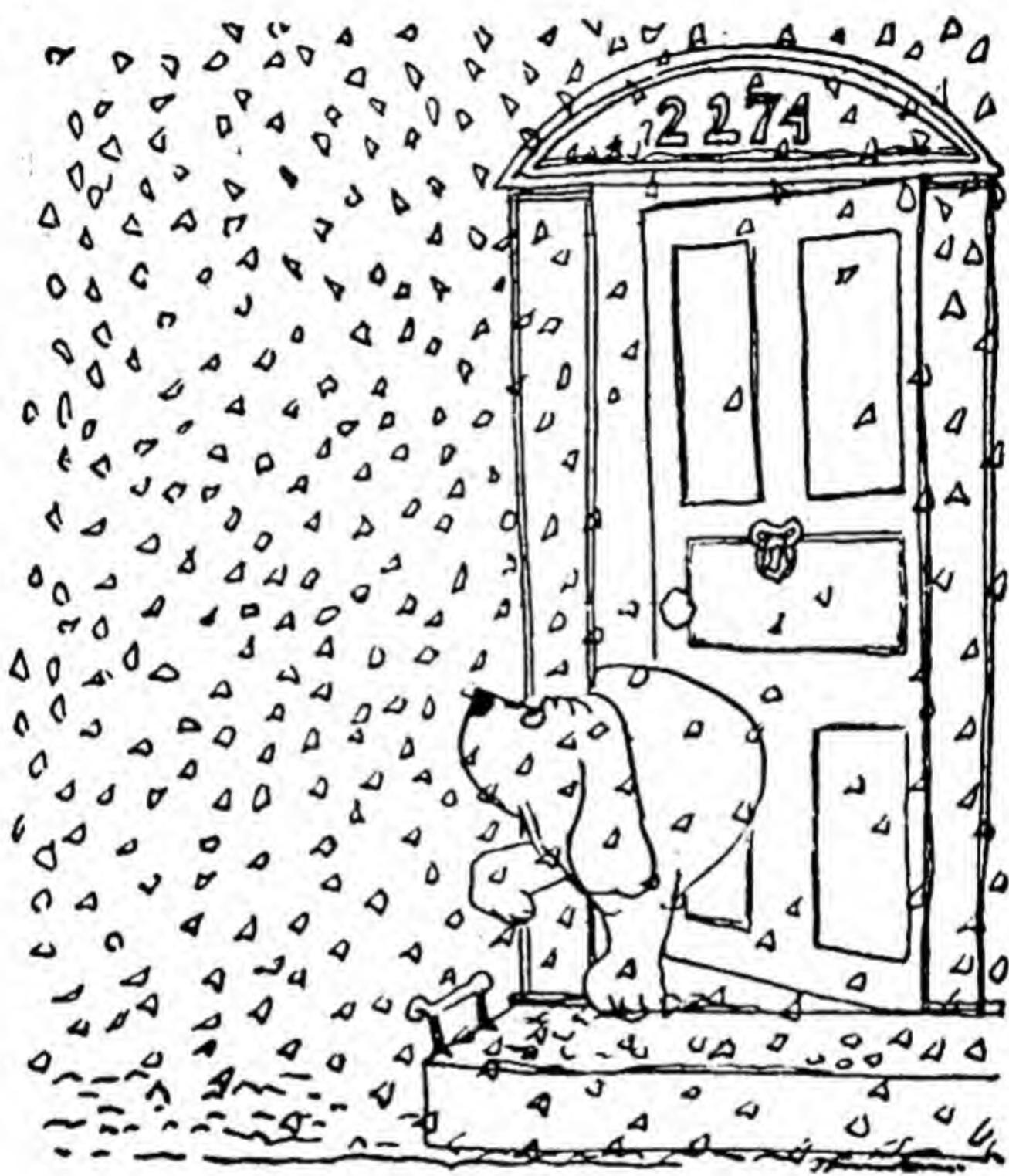
"Well, who made the magic go out of our marriage—you or me?"



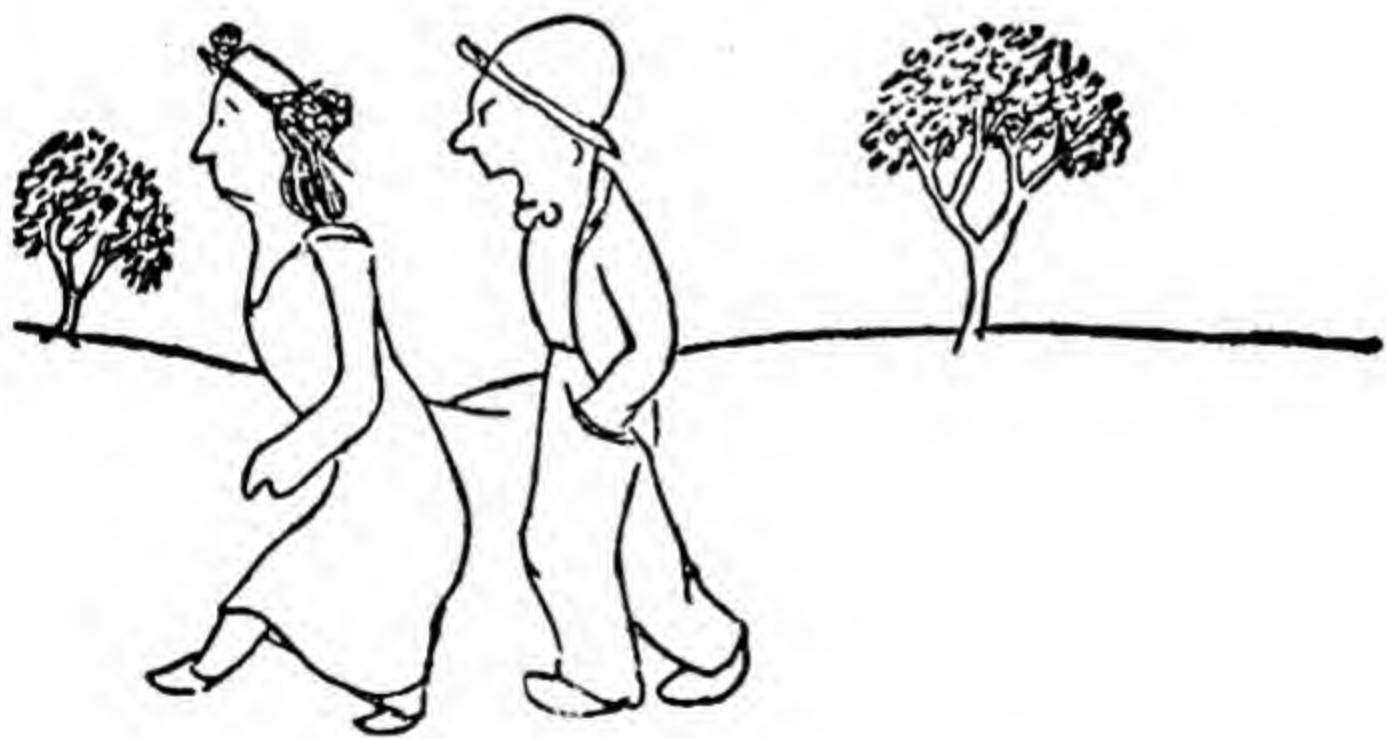
"It's our *own* story *exactly!*! He bold as a hawk, she soft as the dawn."









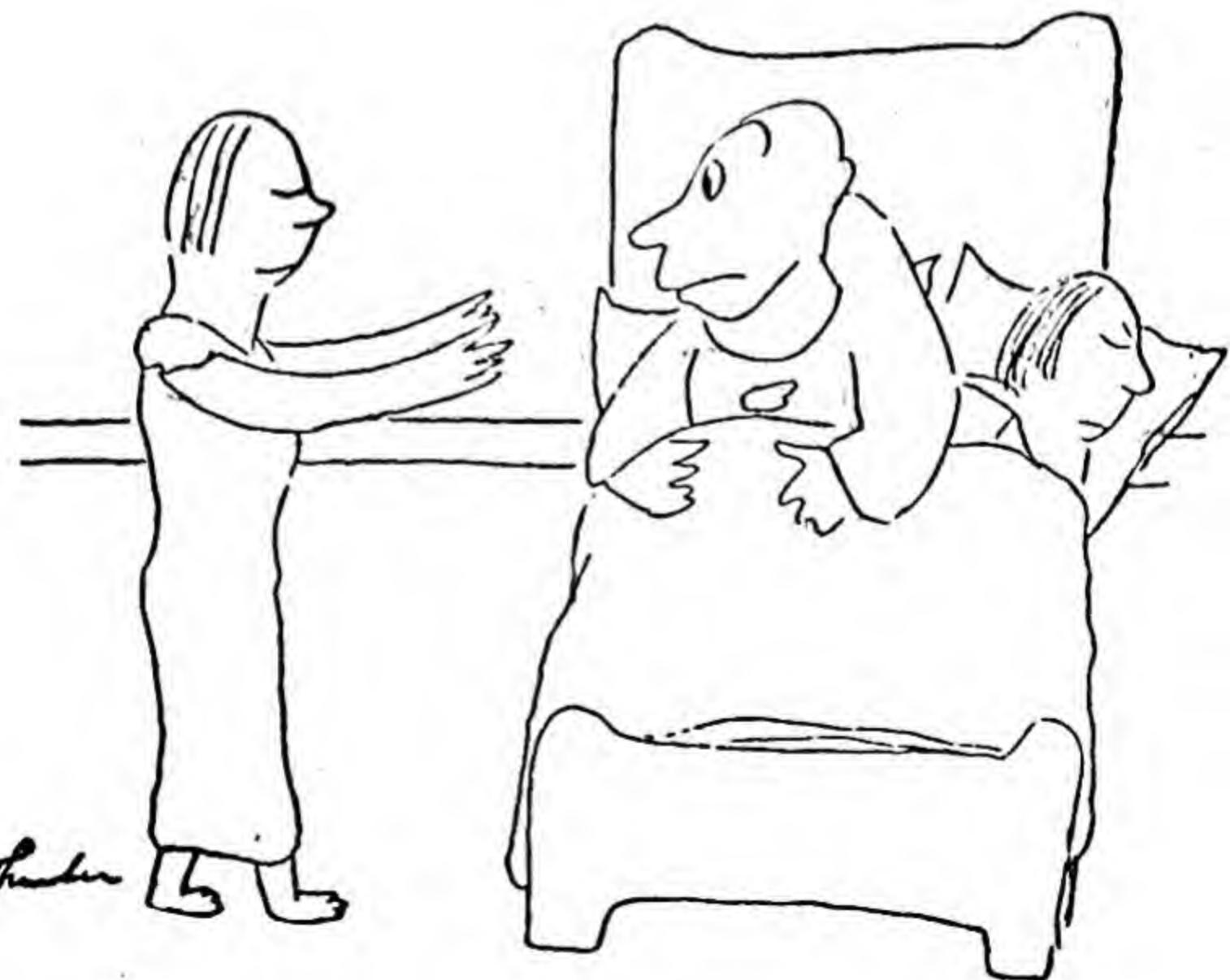
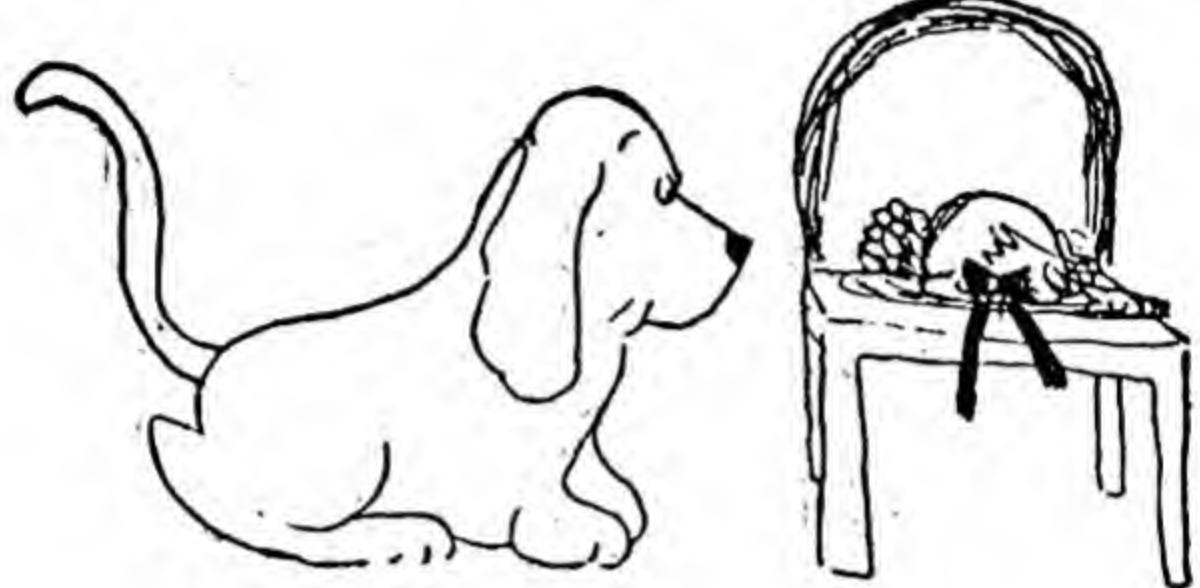


"You and your premonitions!"



"Here! Here! There's a place for that, sir!"

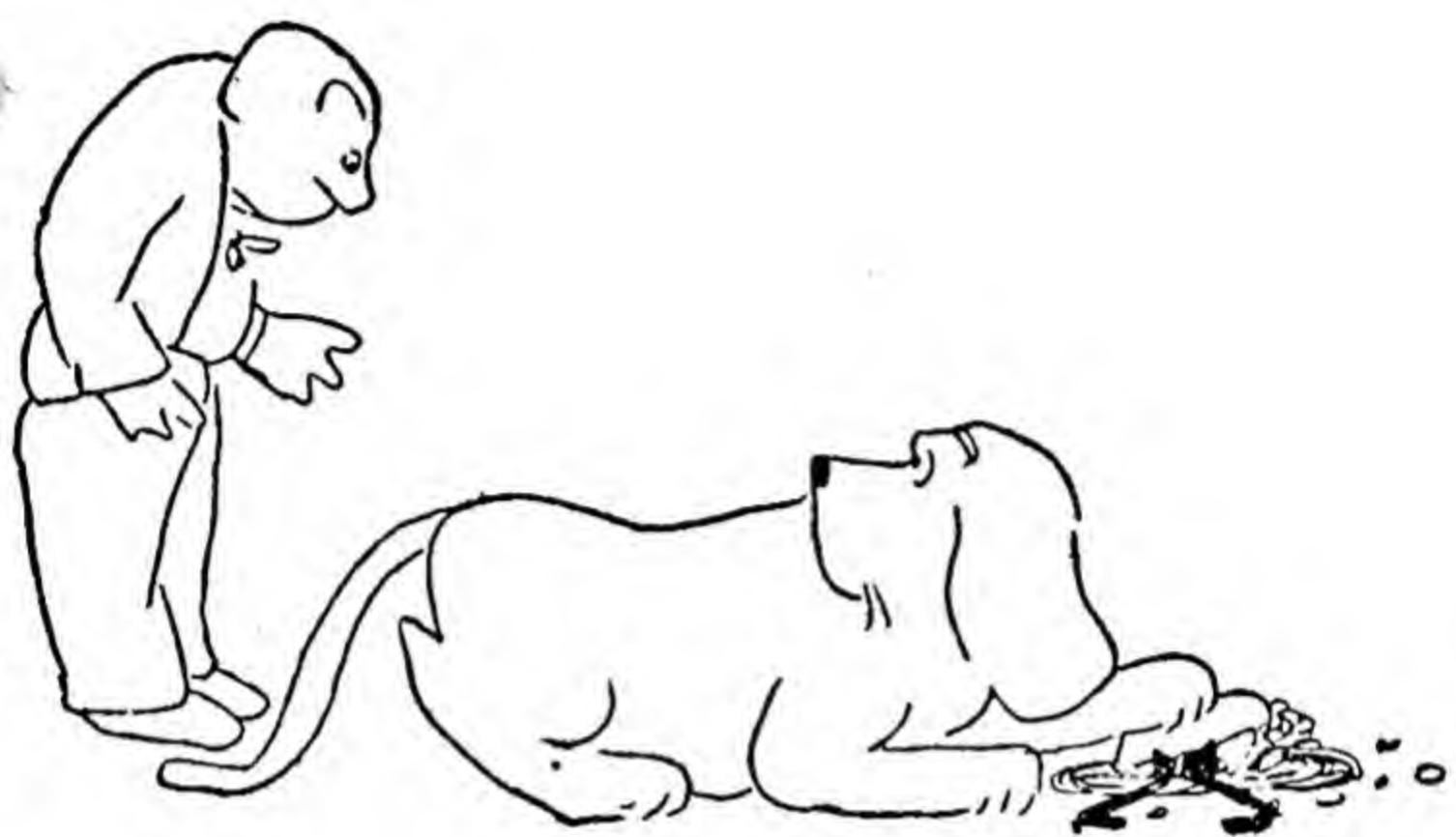
THE HOUND AND THE HAT



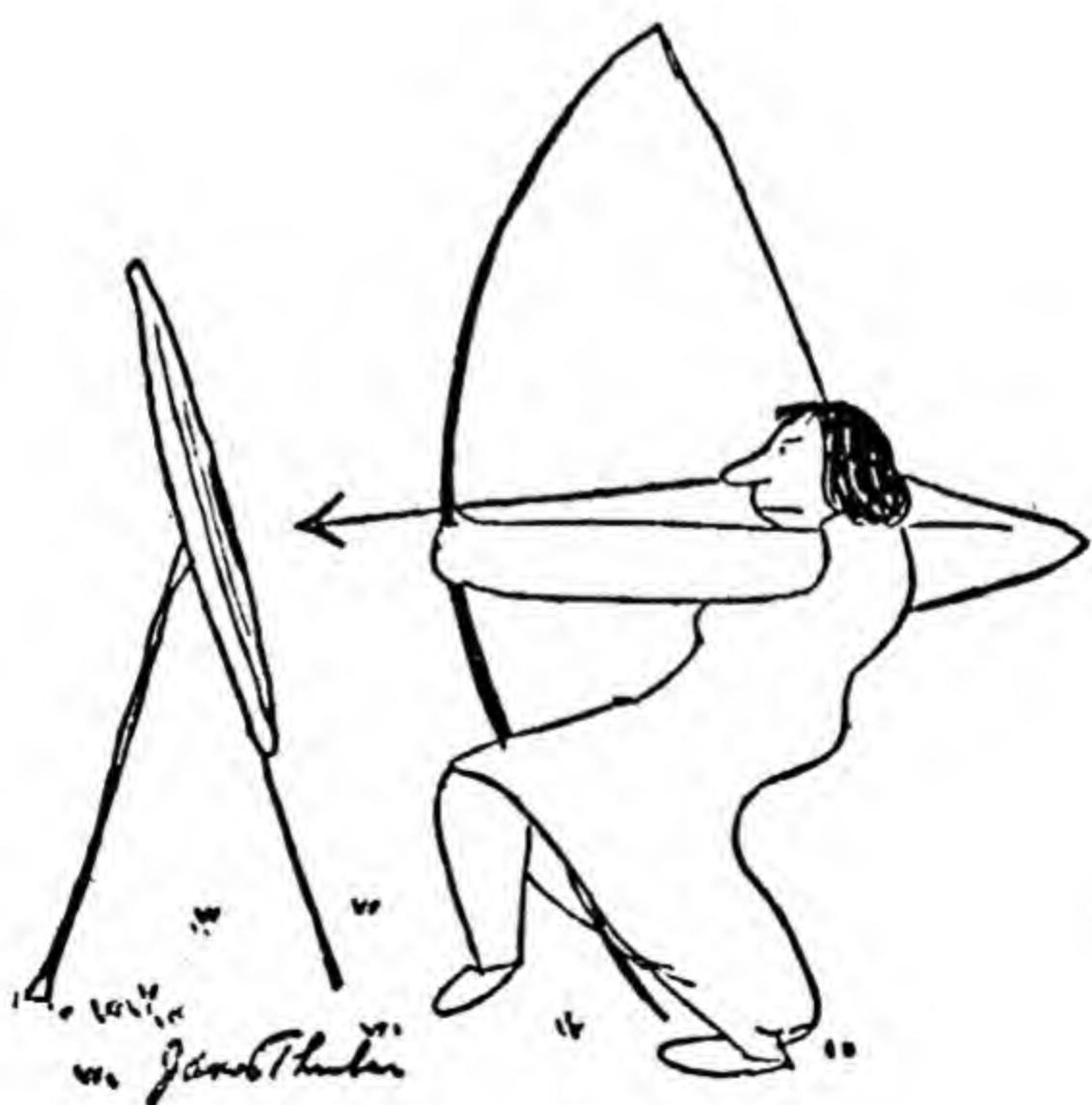


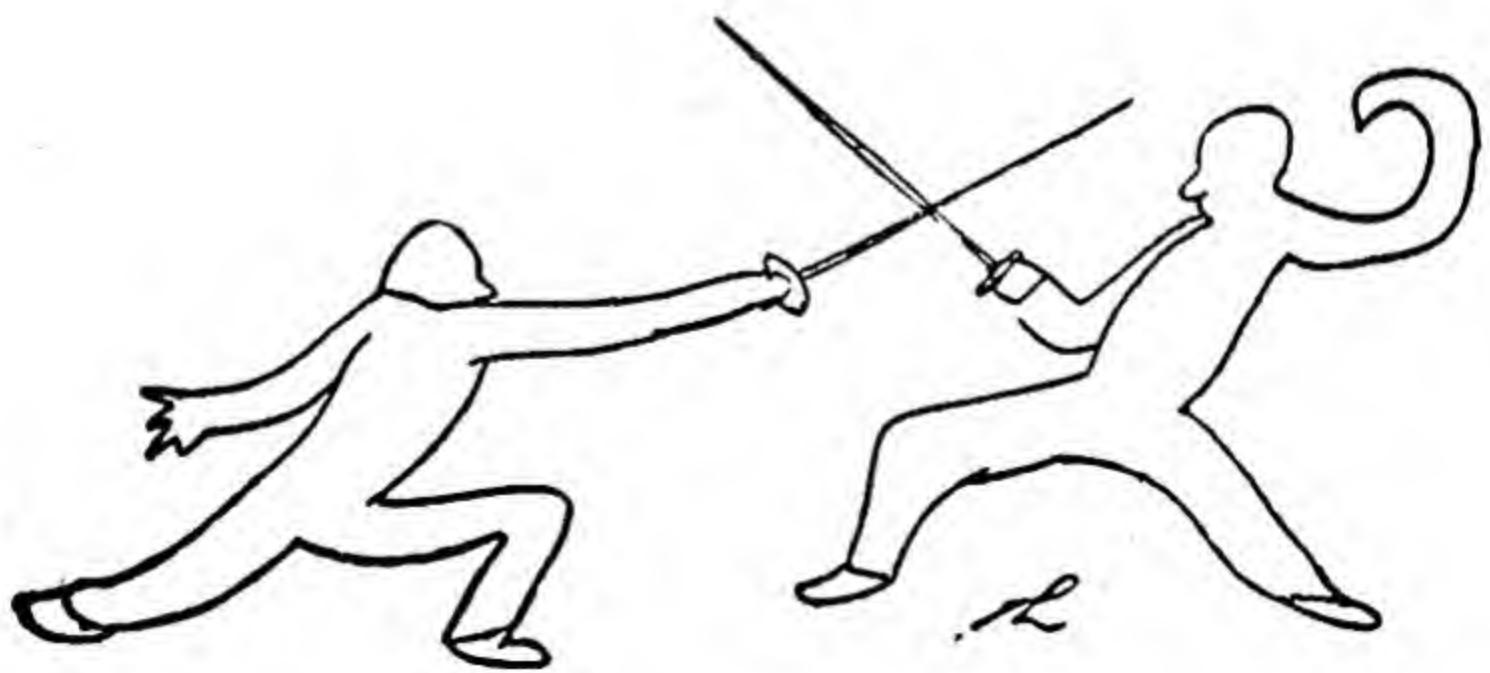
THE HOUND AND THE HAT



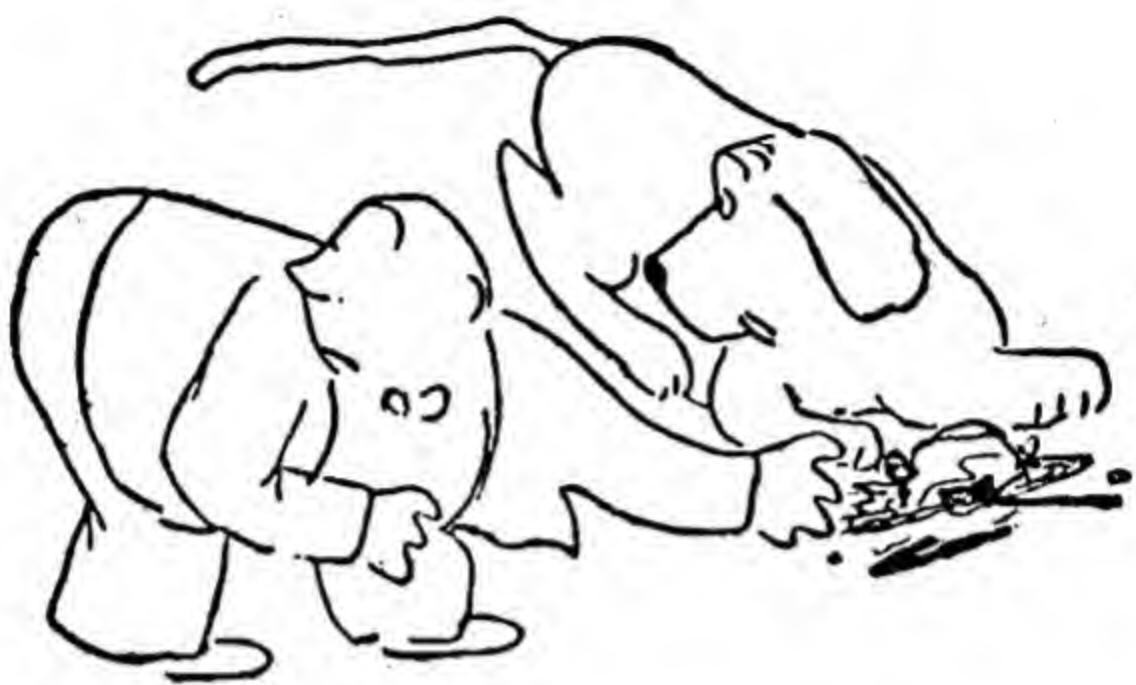


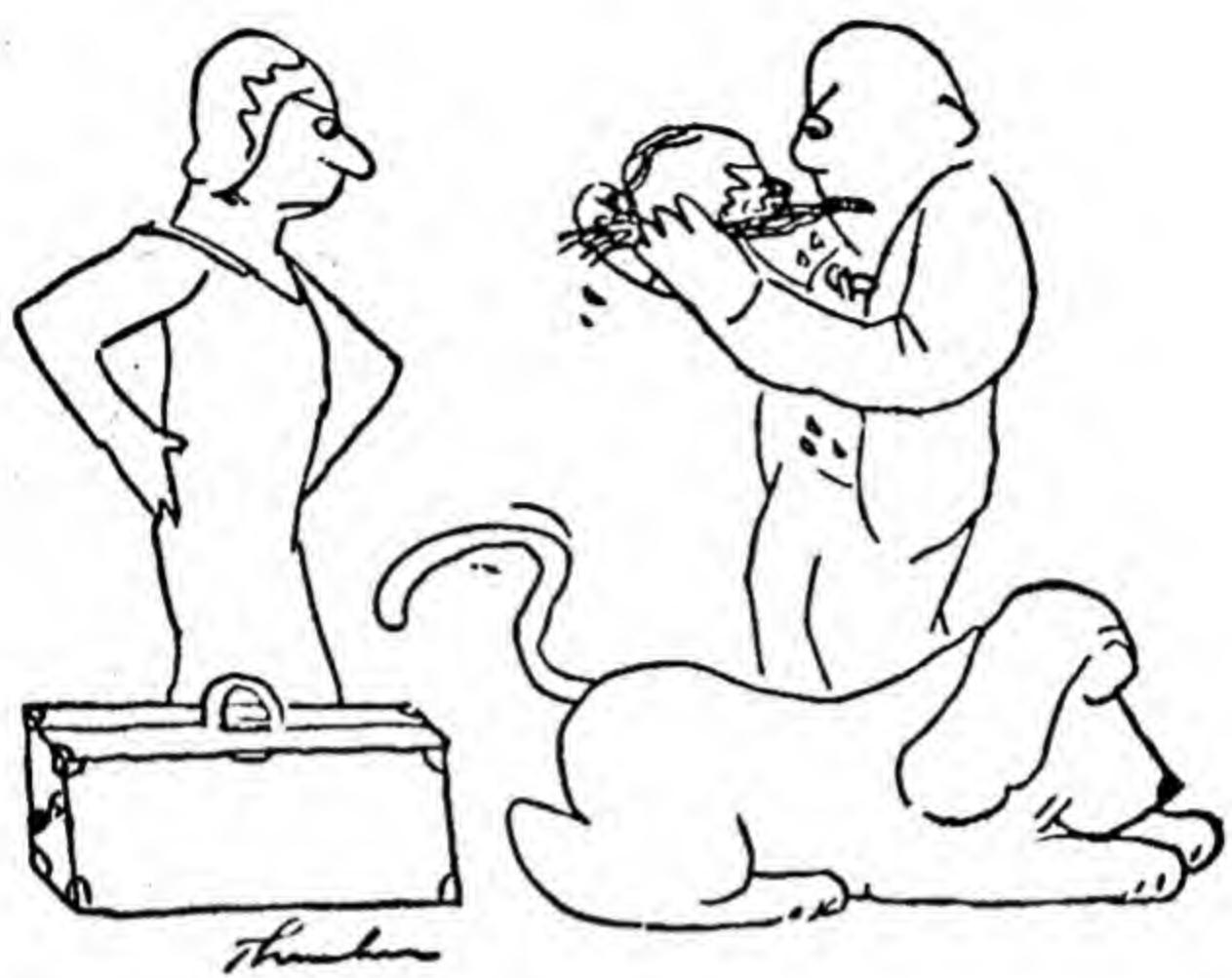
THE HOUND AND THE HAT

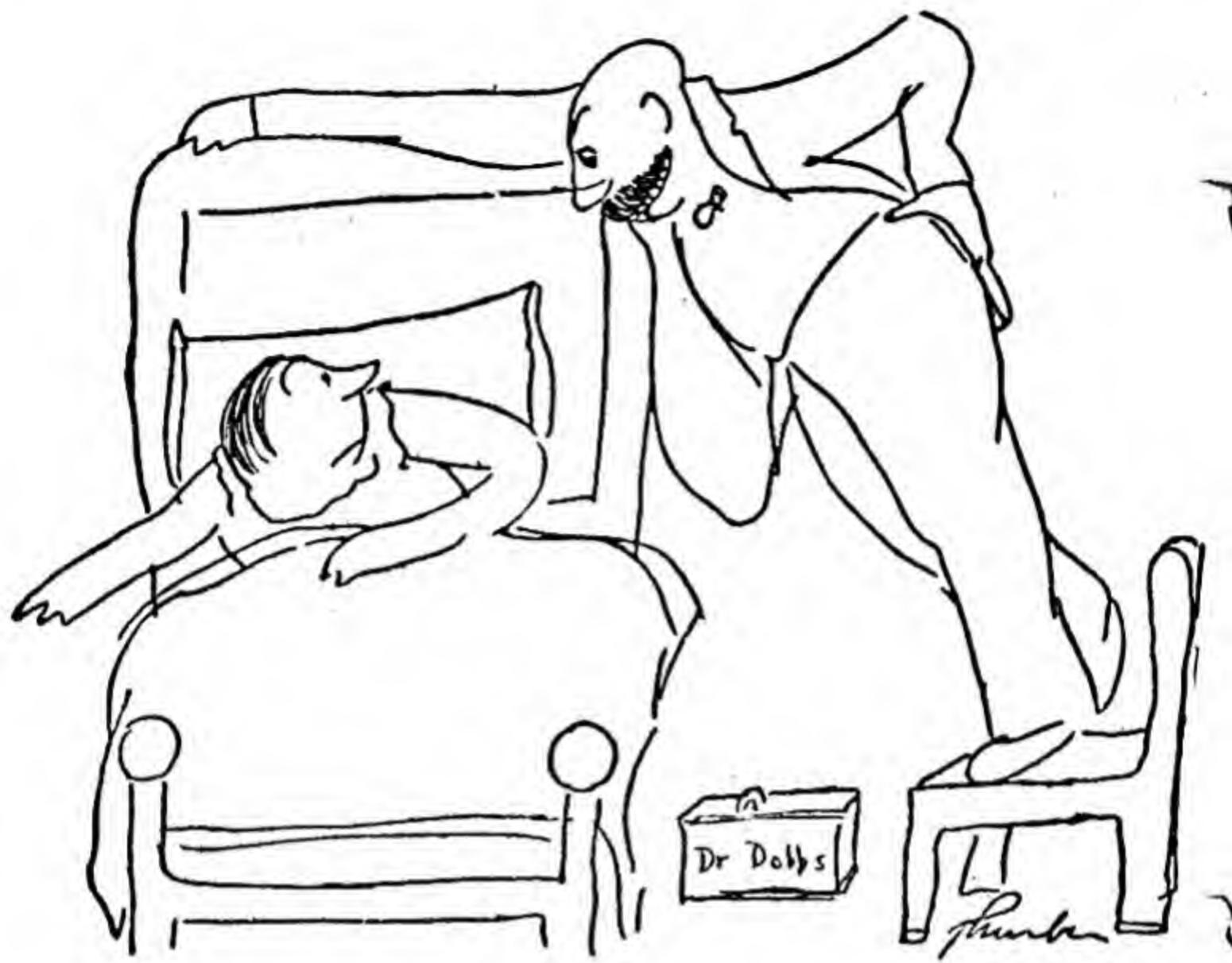




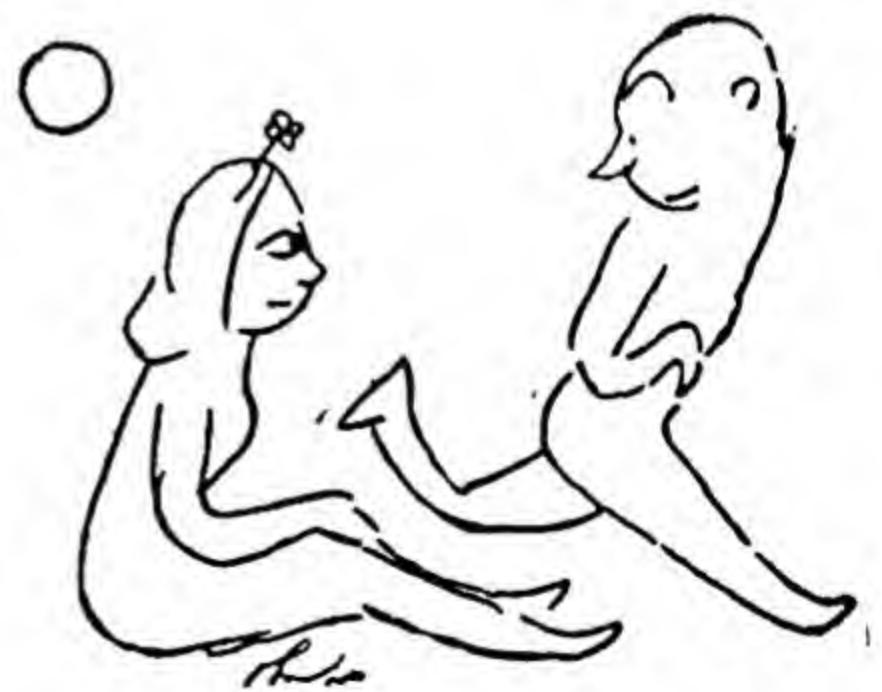
THE HOUND AND THE HAT

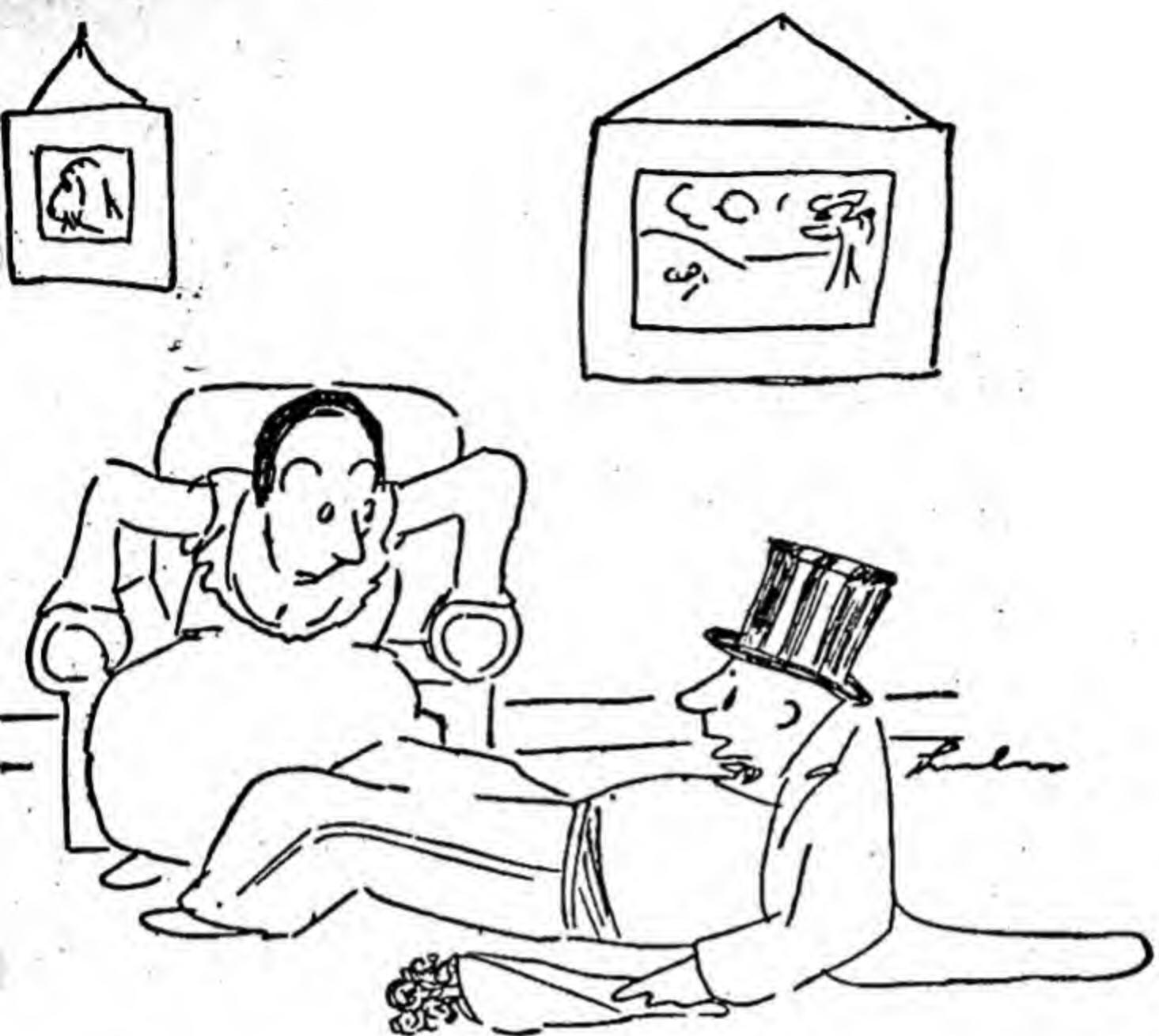






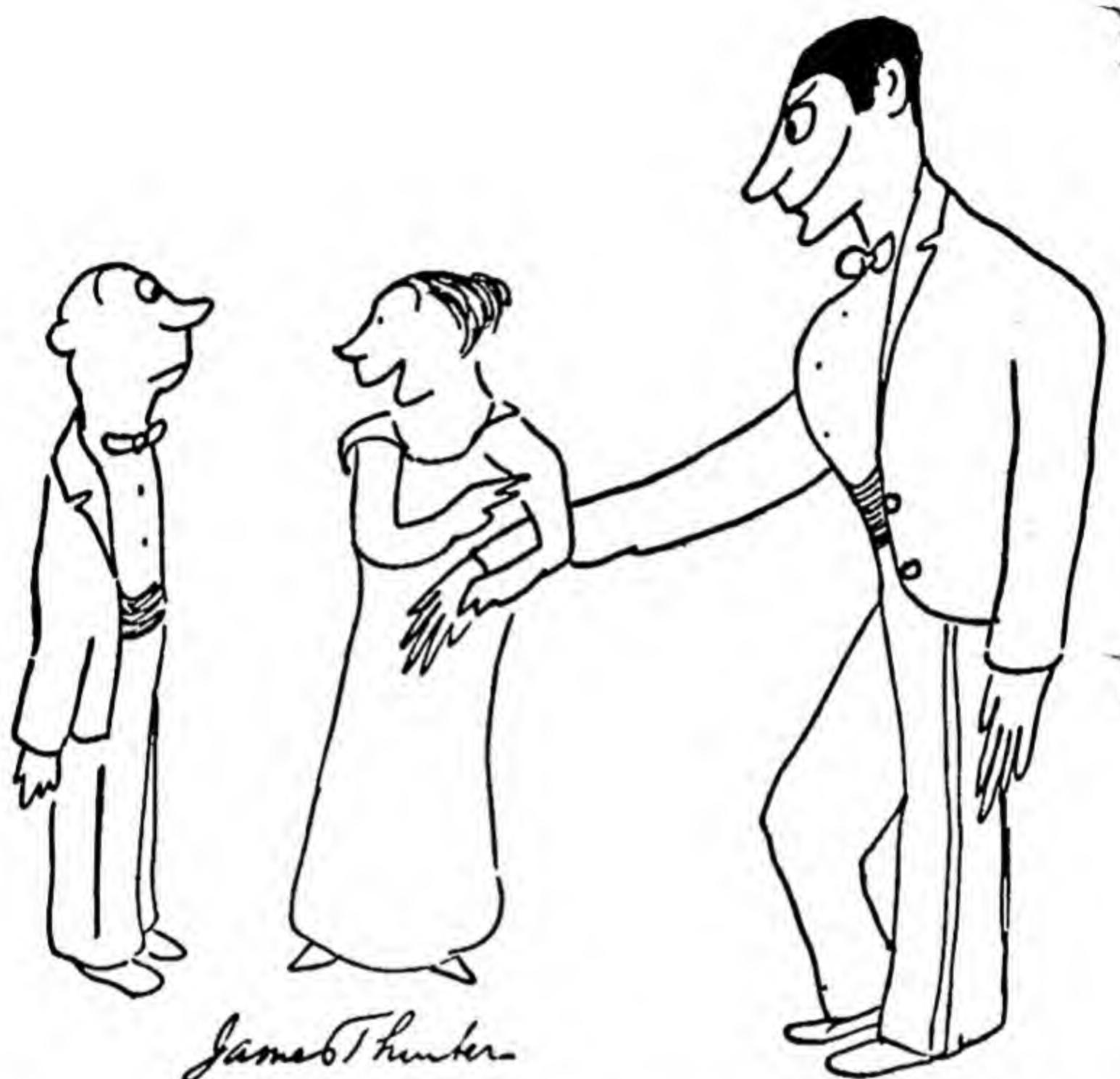
"You're not my patient, you're my meat, Mrs. Quist!"



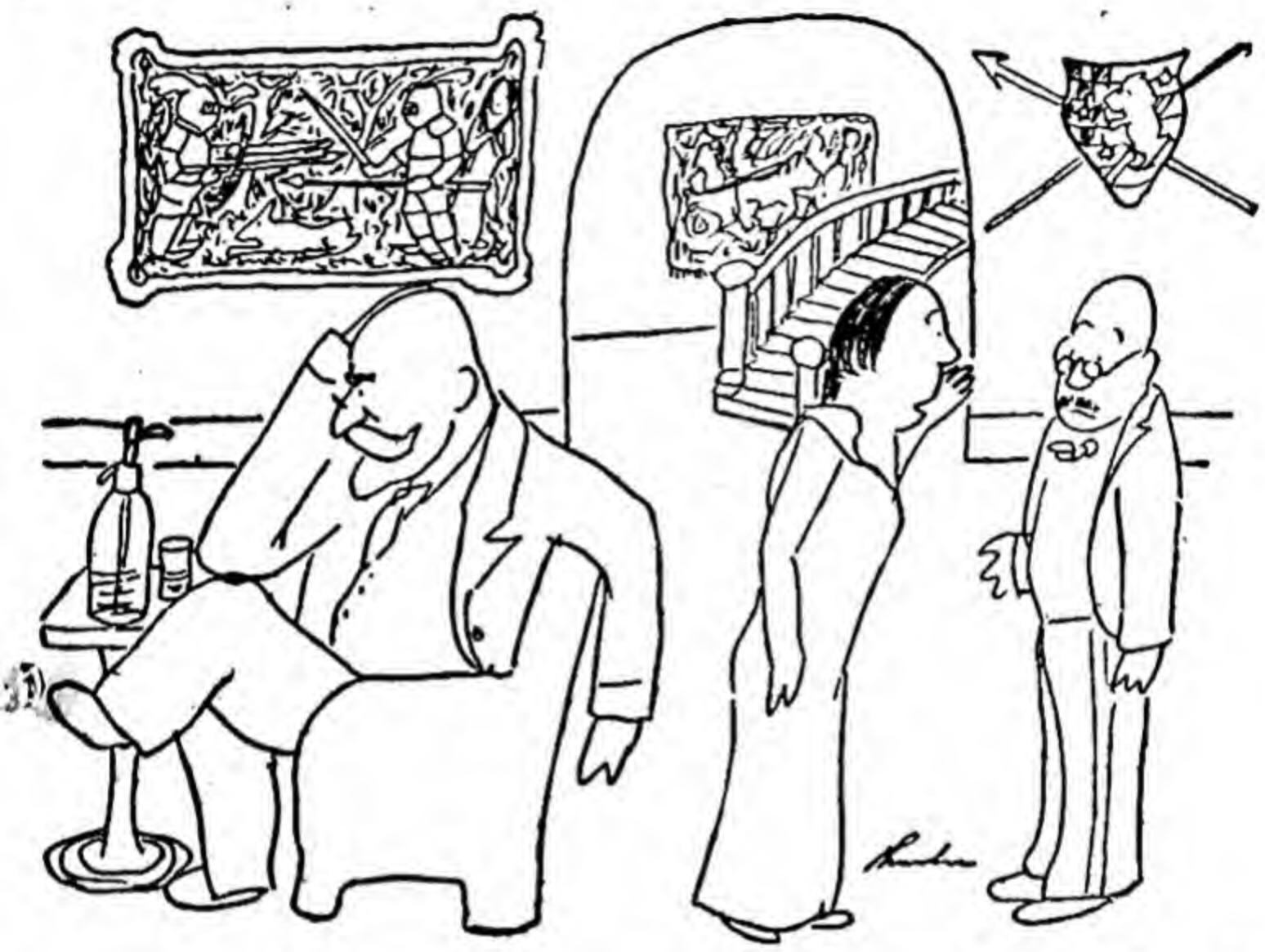


"This is not the real me you're seeing, Mrs. Clisbie."





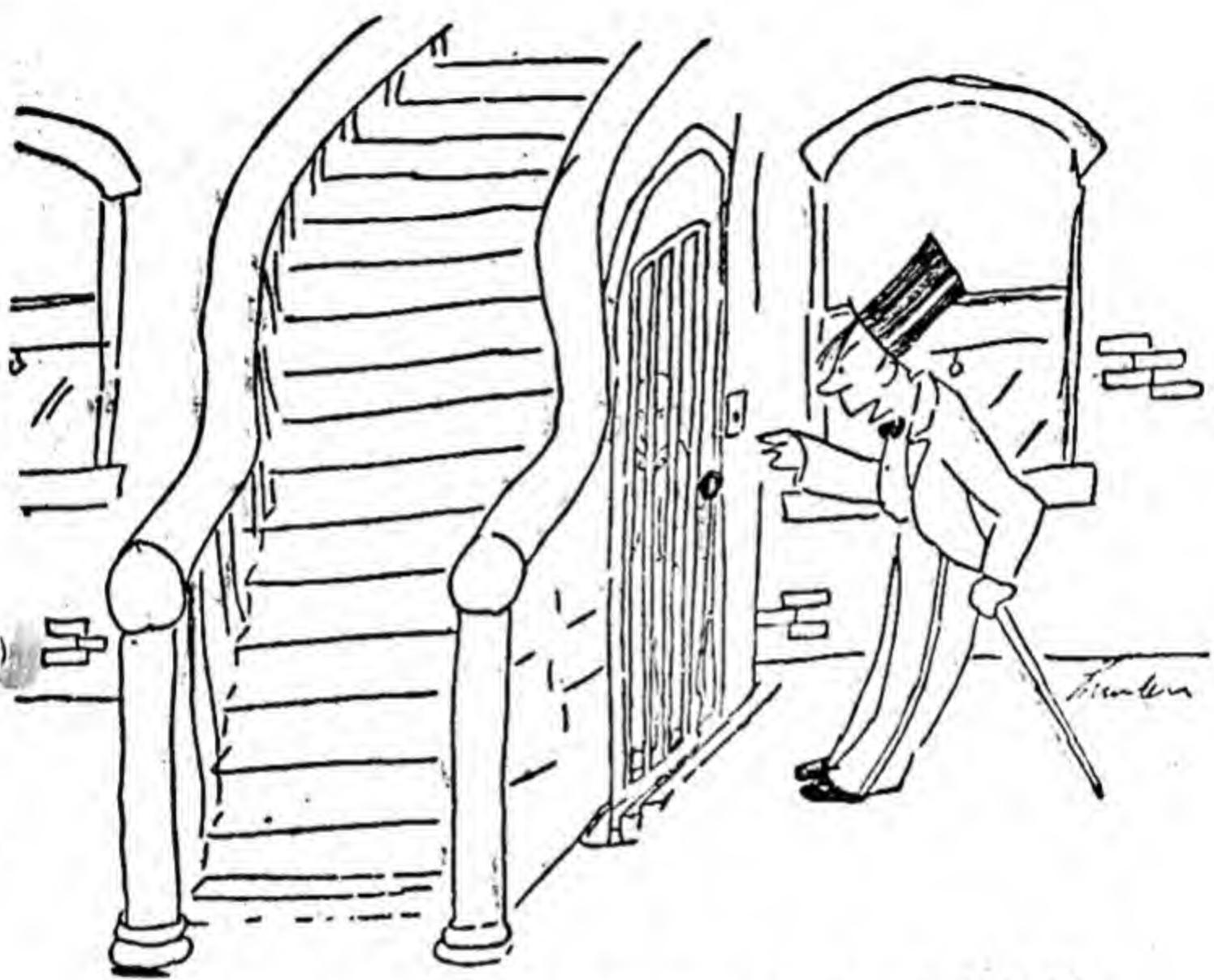
"I want you to know Mr. Thrawn, Mr. Simms. Mr. Thrawn claims to be a werewolf."



"He's just heard about the changes that are taking place in civilization."



"I beg to differ with you!"



"Tell her she's *afraid* to come out and fight!"

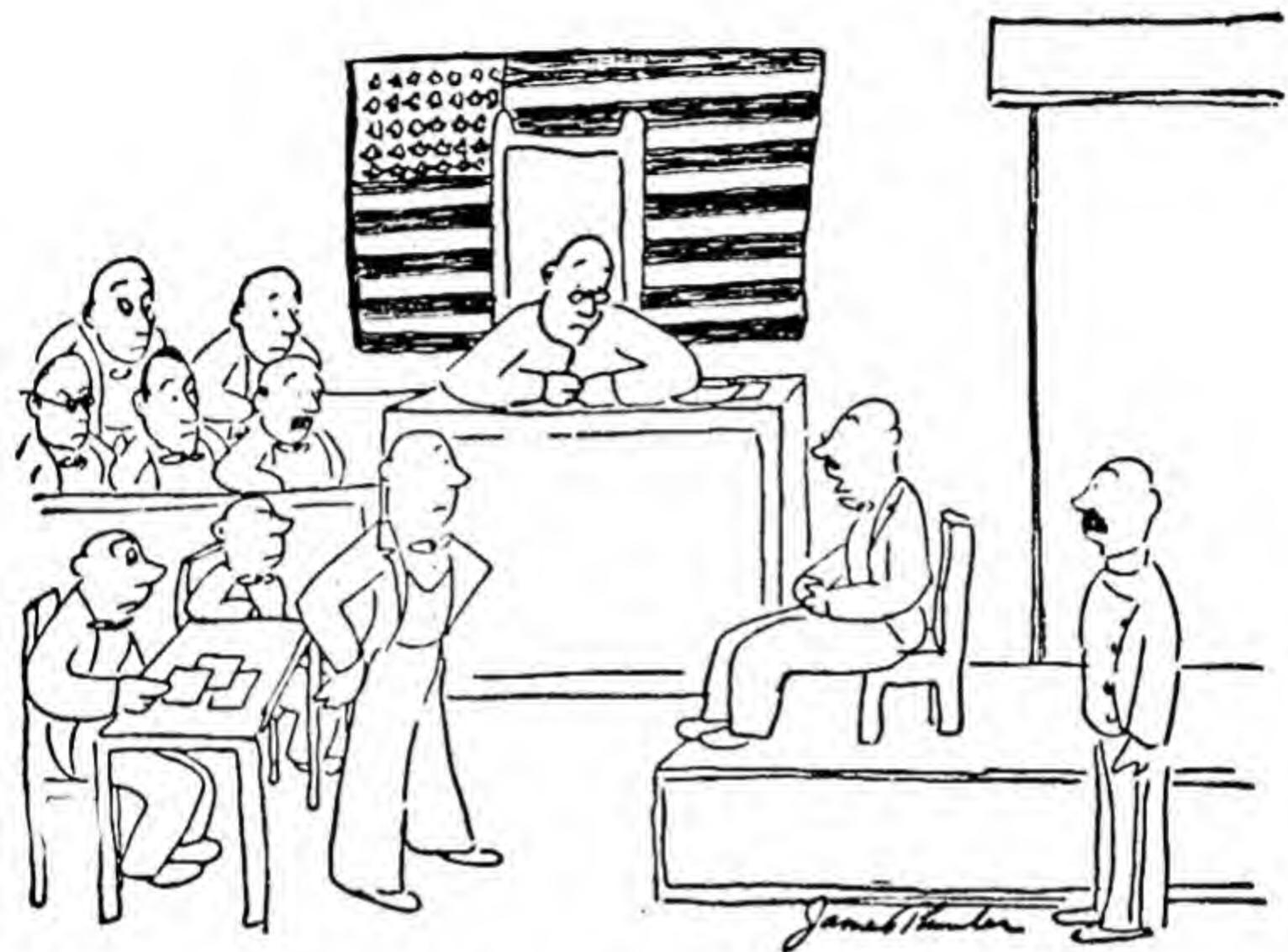


"It's Parkins, sir, we're 'aving a bit of a time below stairs."

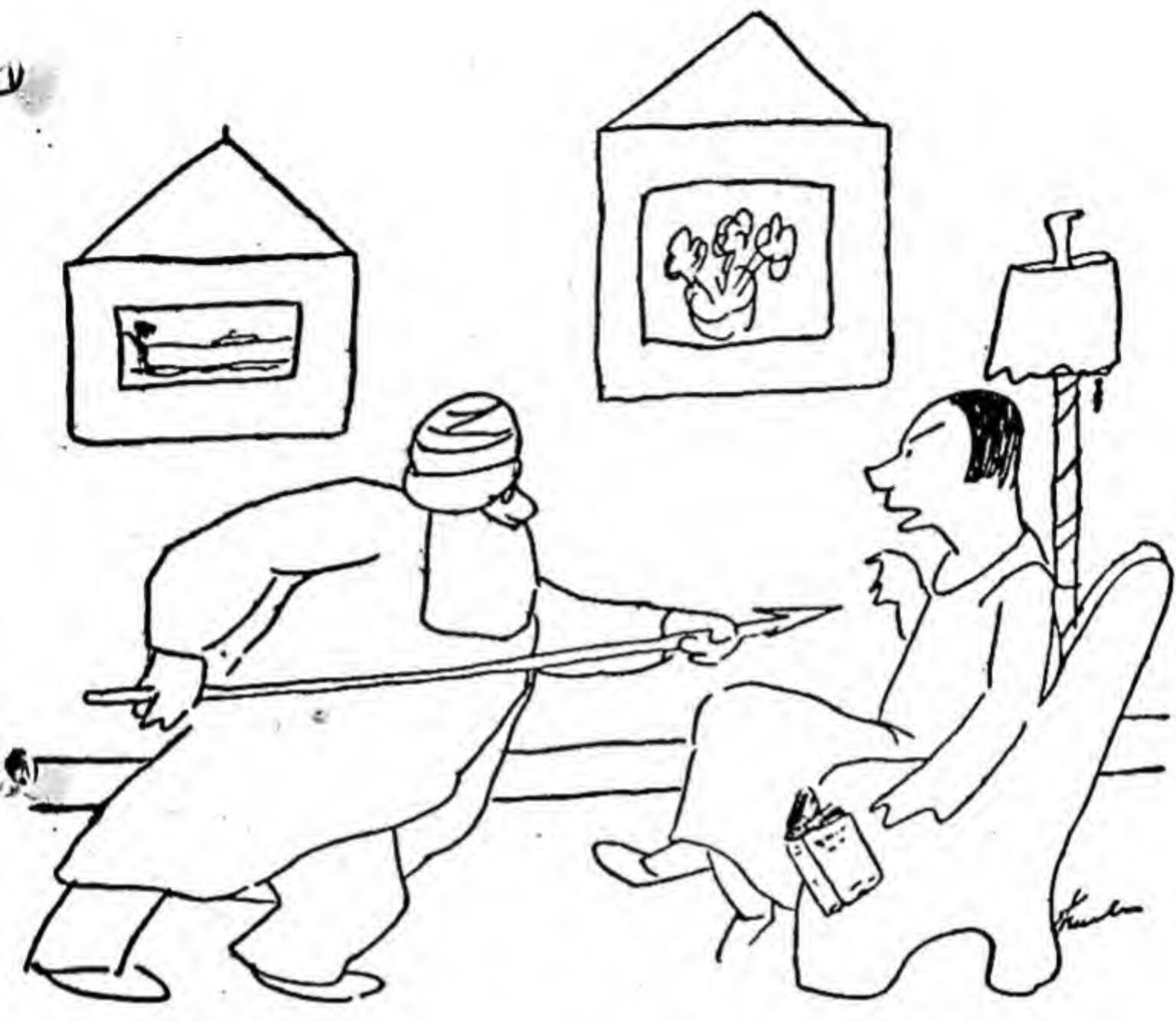


"One of you men in the kitchen give the officer another drink!"

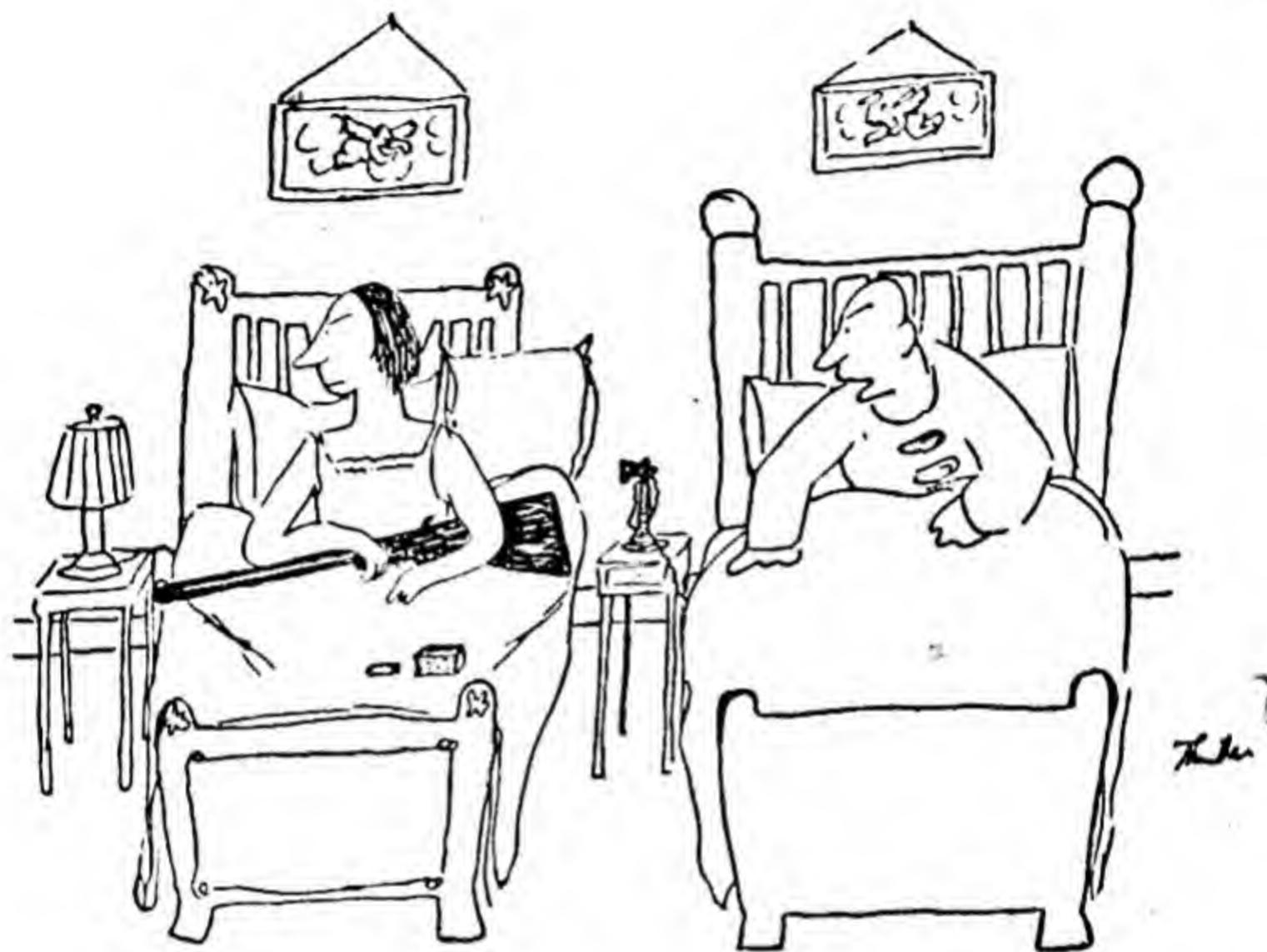




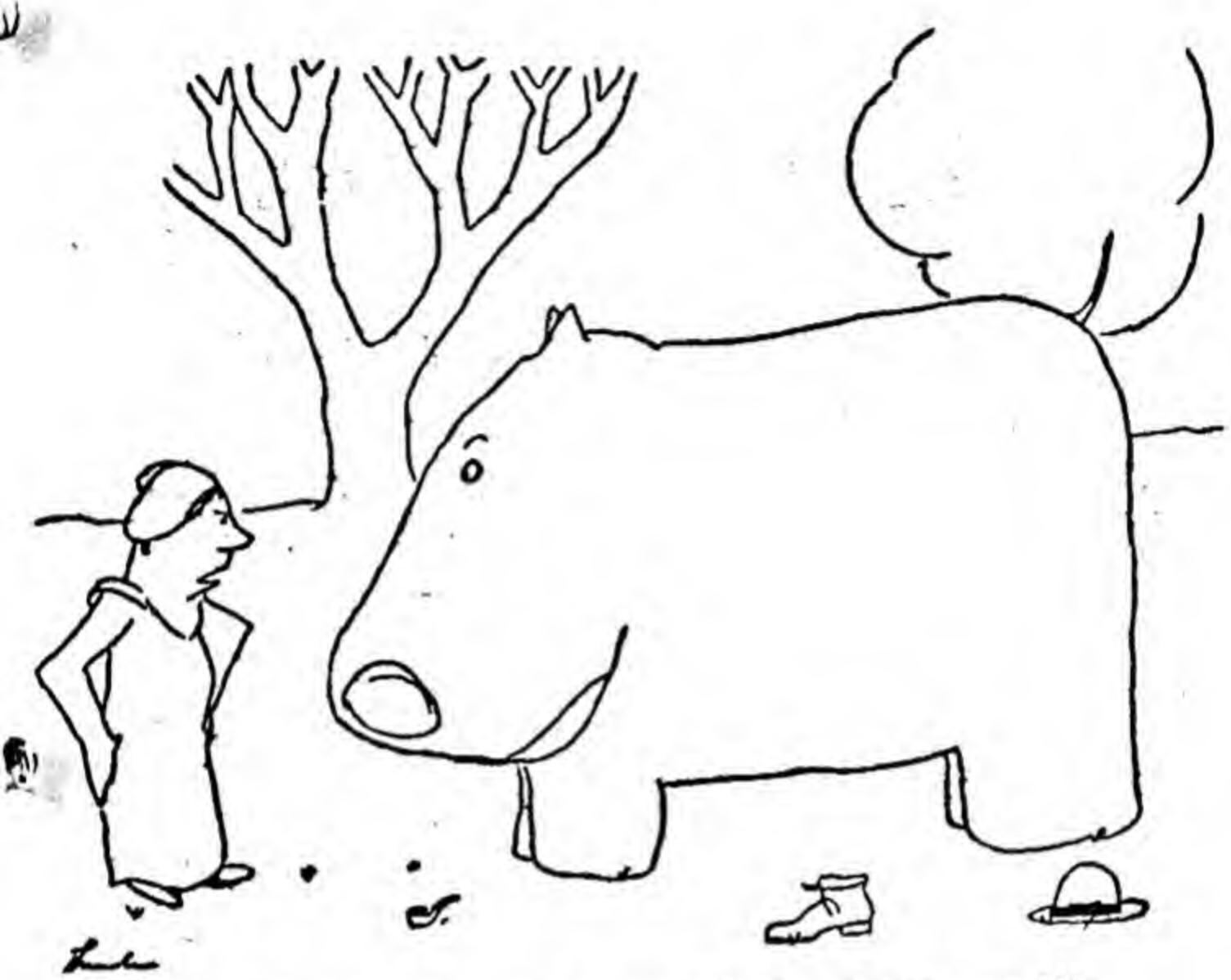
"I'm Virgo with the moon in Aries, if that will help you
any."



"George! If that's you I'll never forgive you!"



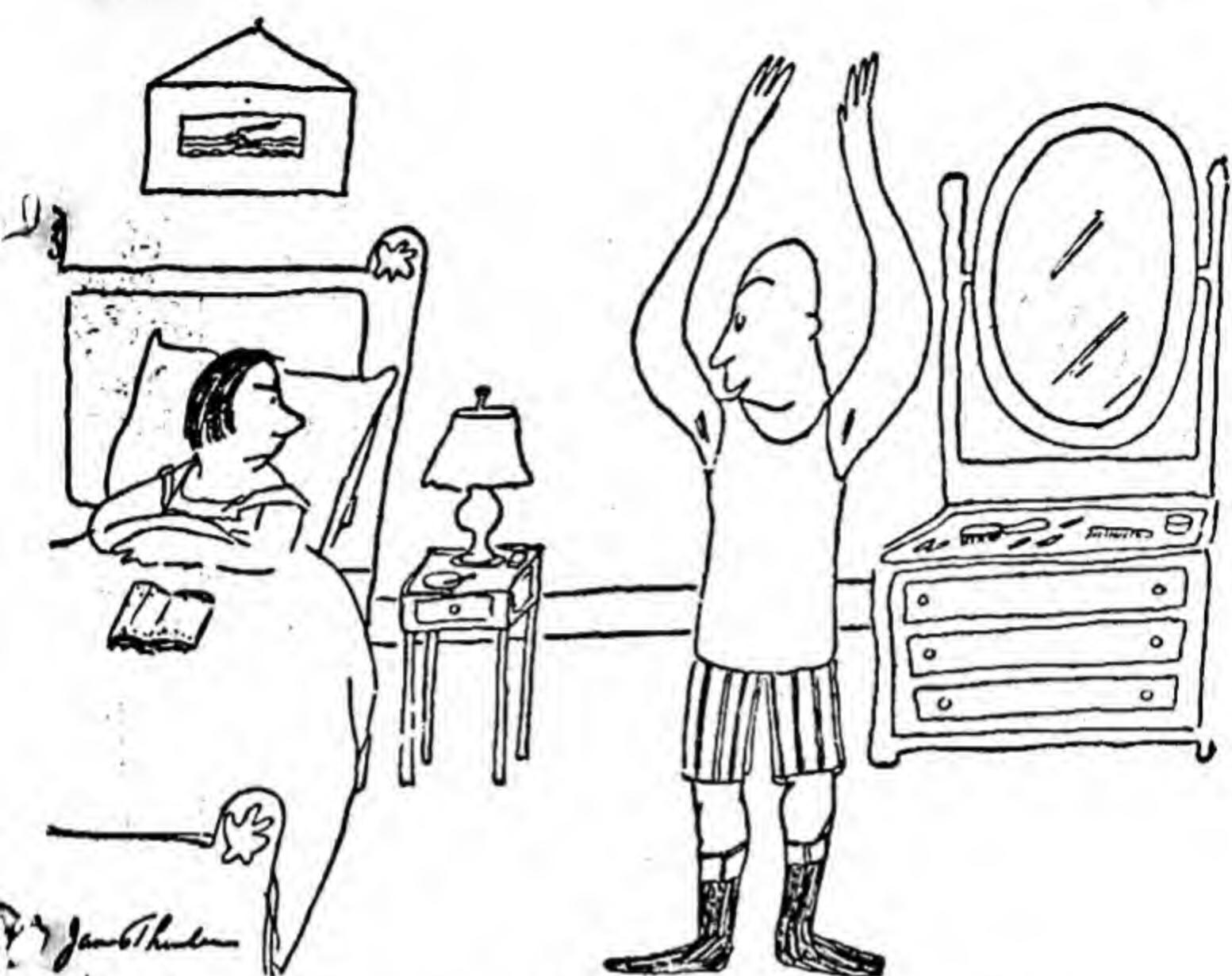
"I tell you there isn't going to *be* any insurrection."



"What have you done with Dr. Millmoss?"



"I thought you'd enjoy Miss Perrish, darling. She has a constant ringing in *her* ears, too."

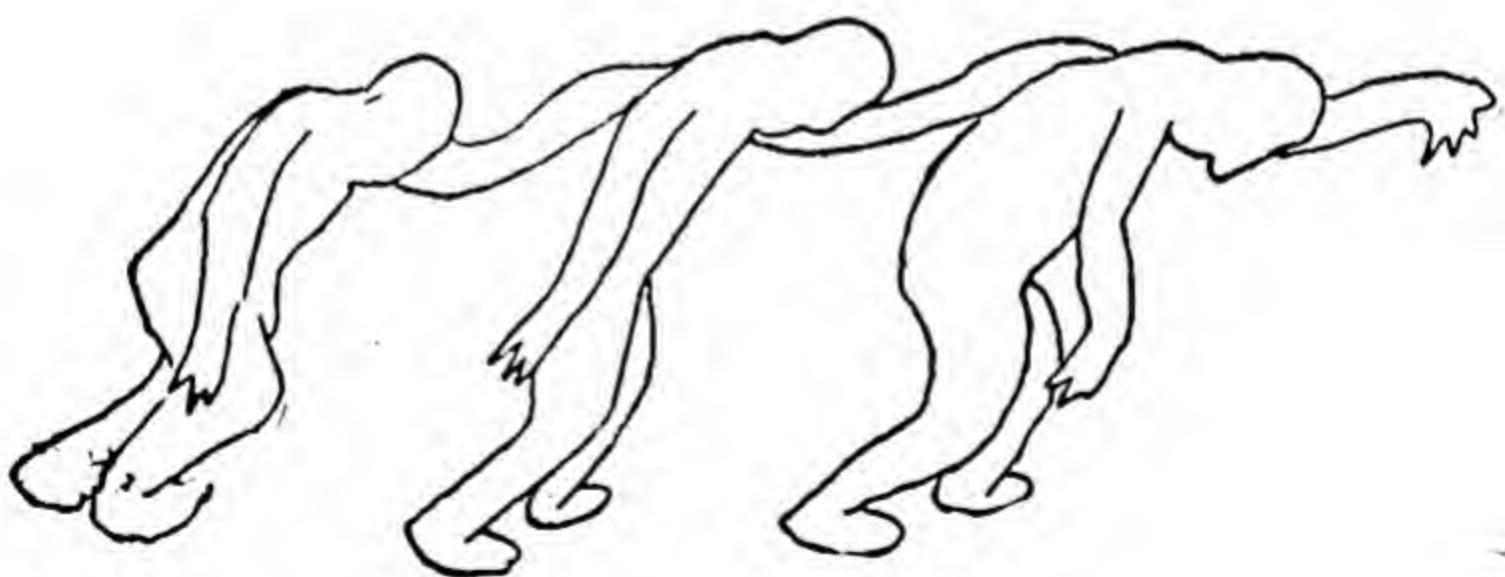


"You tell me if I bend my knees, Sugar."

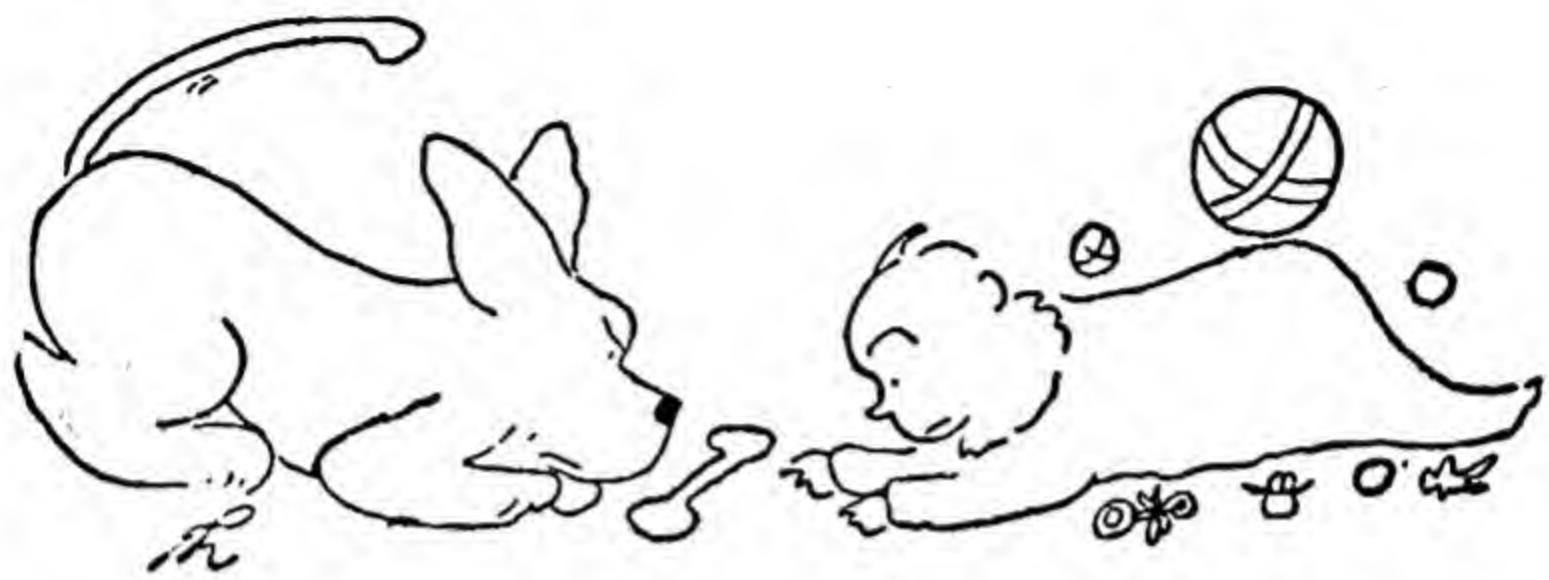


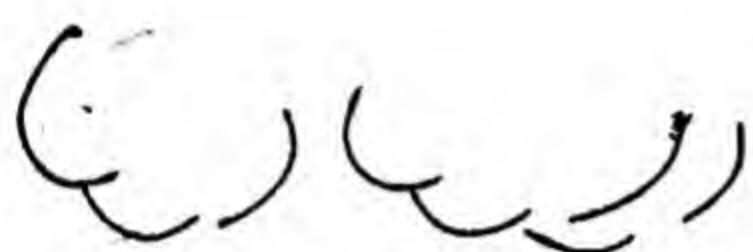


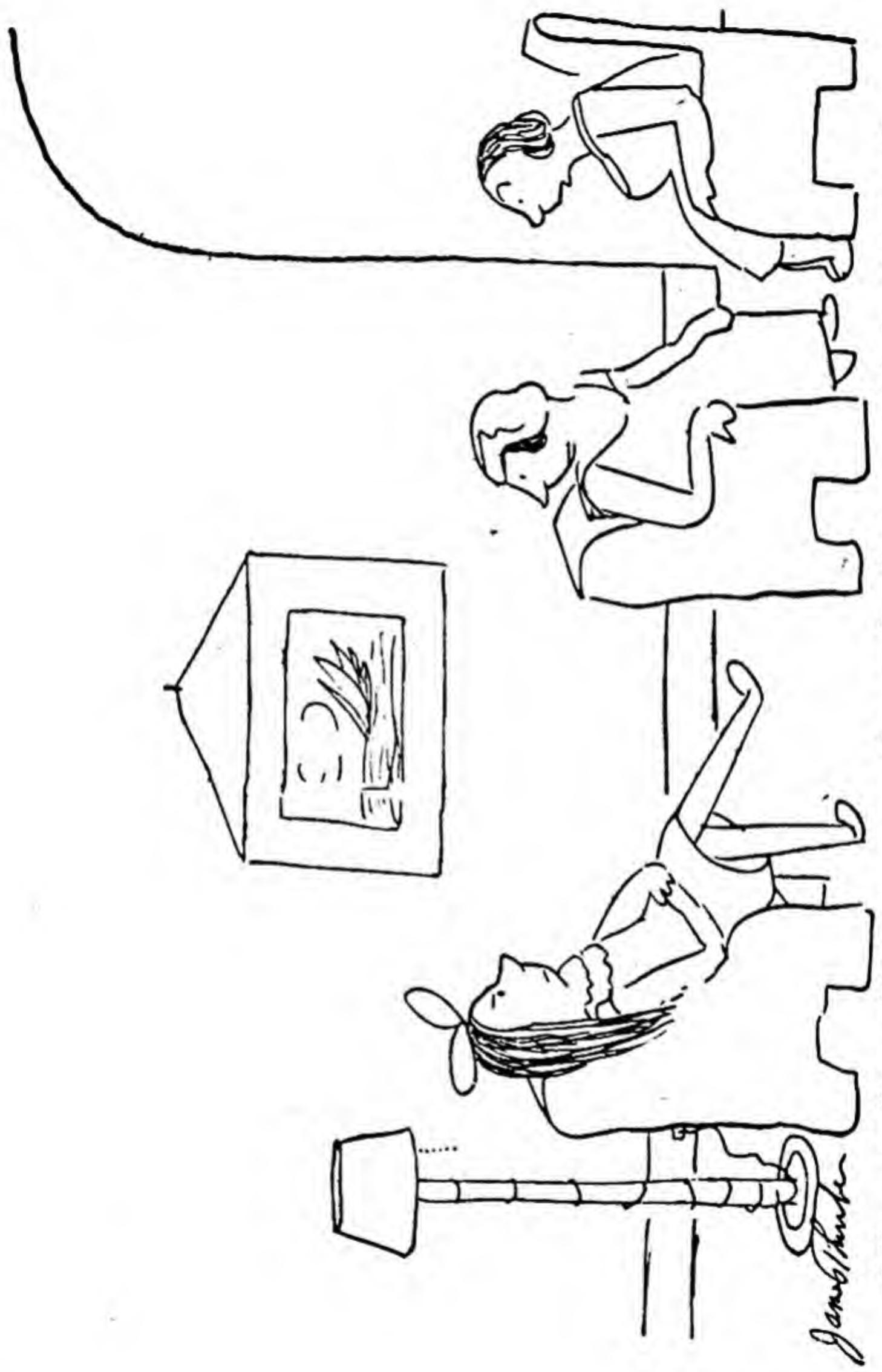
thumb



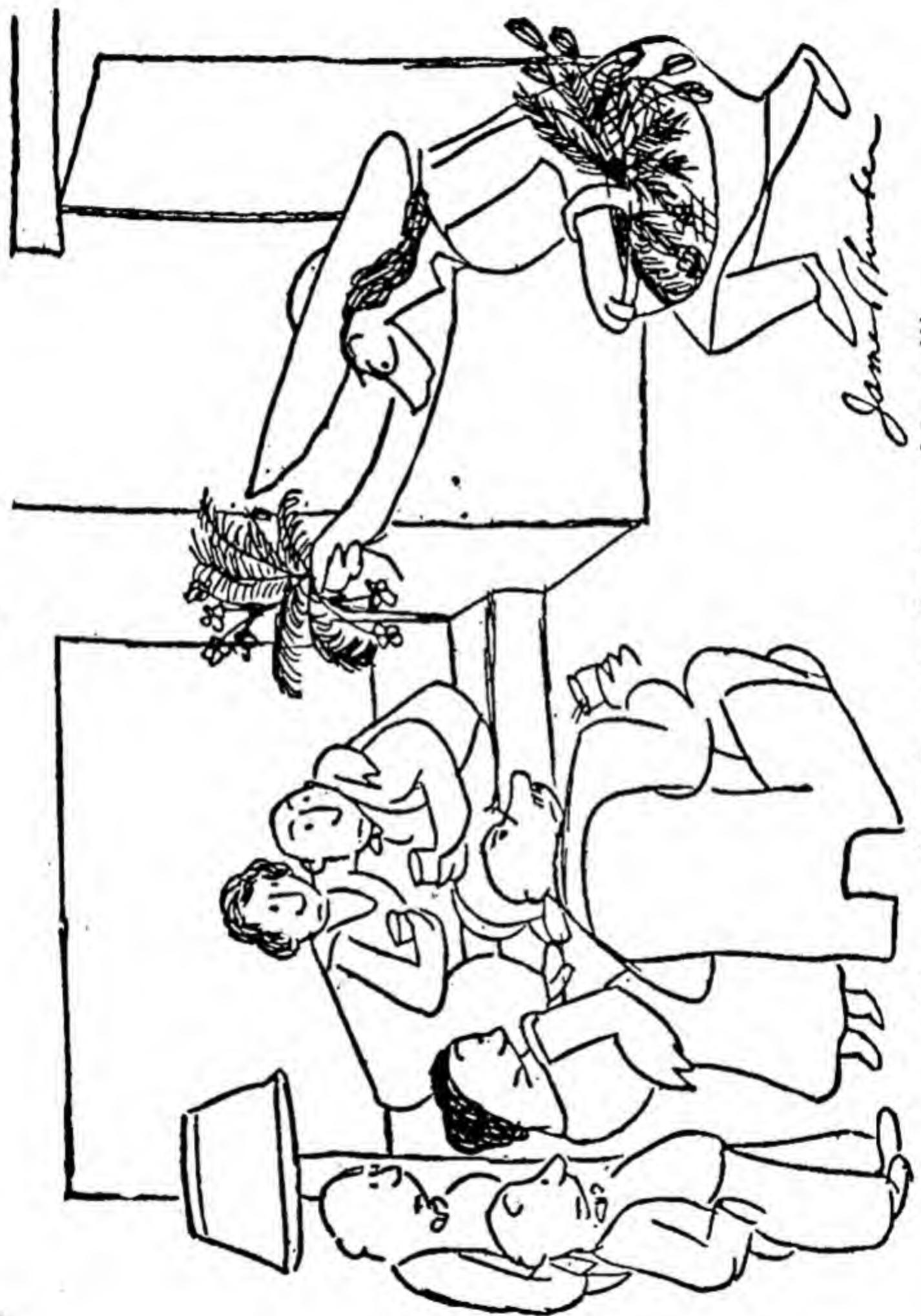




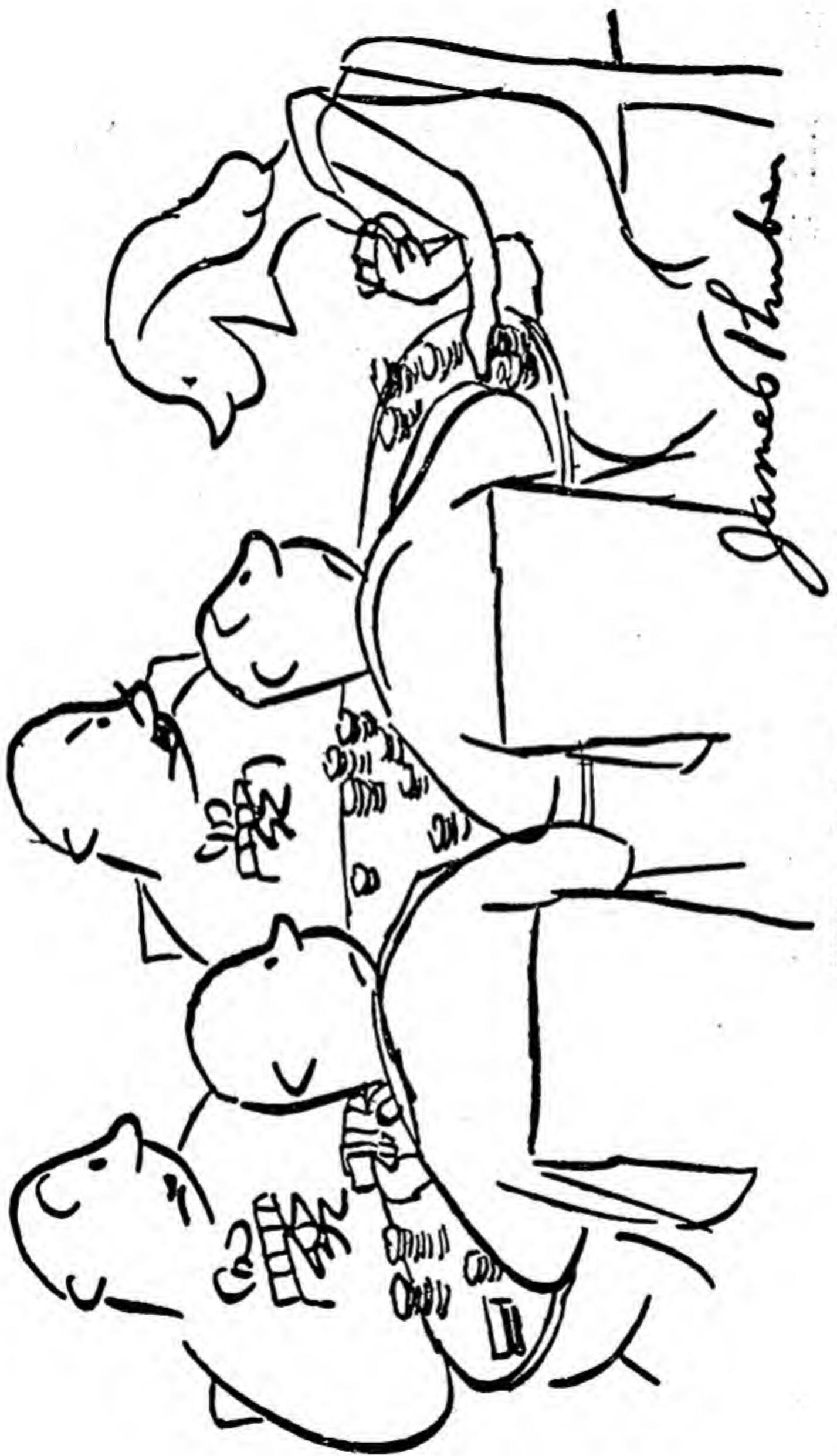


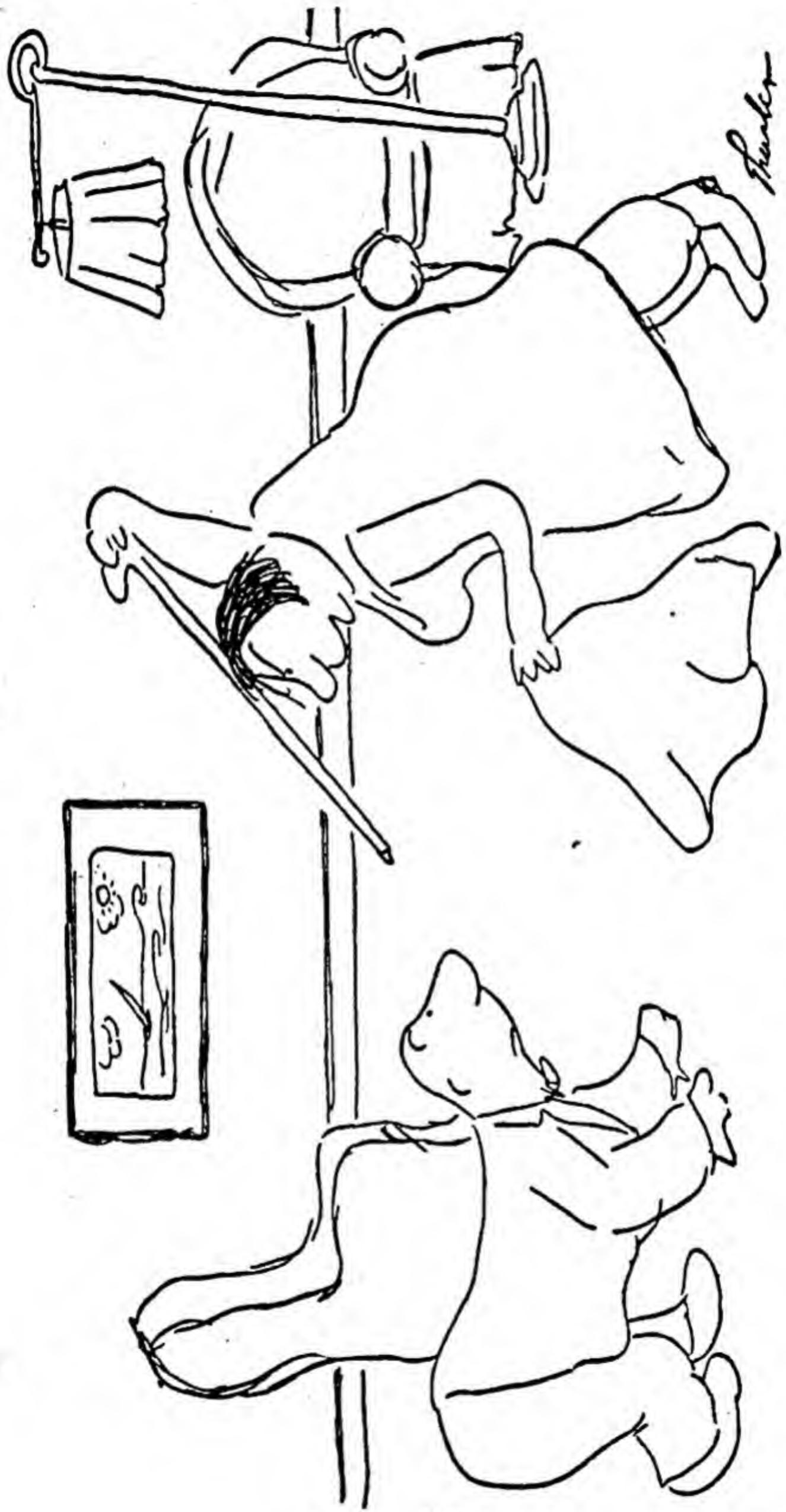


"She predicts either war or the end of the world in October."

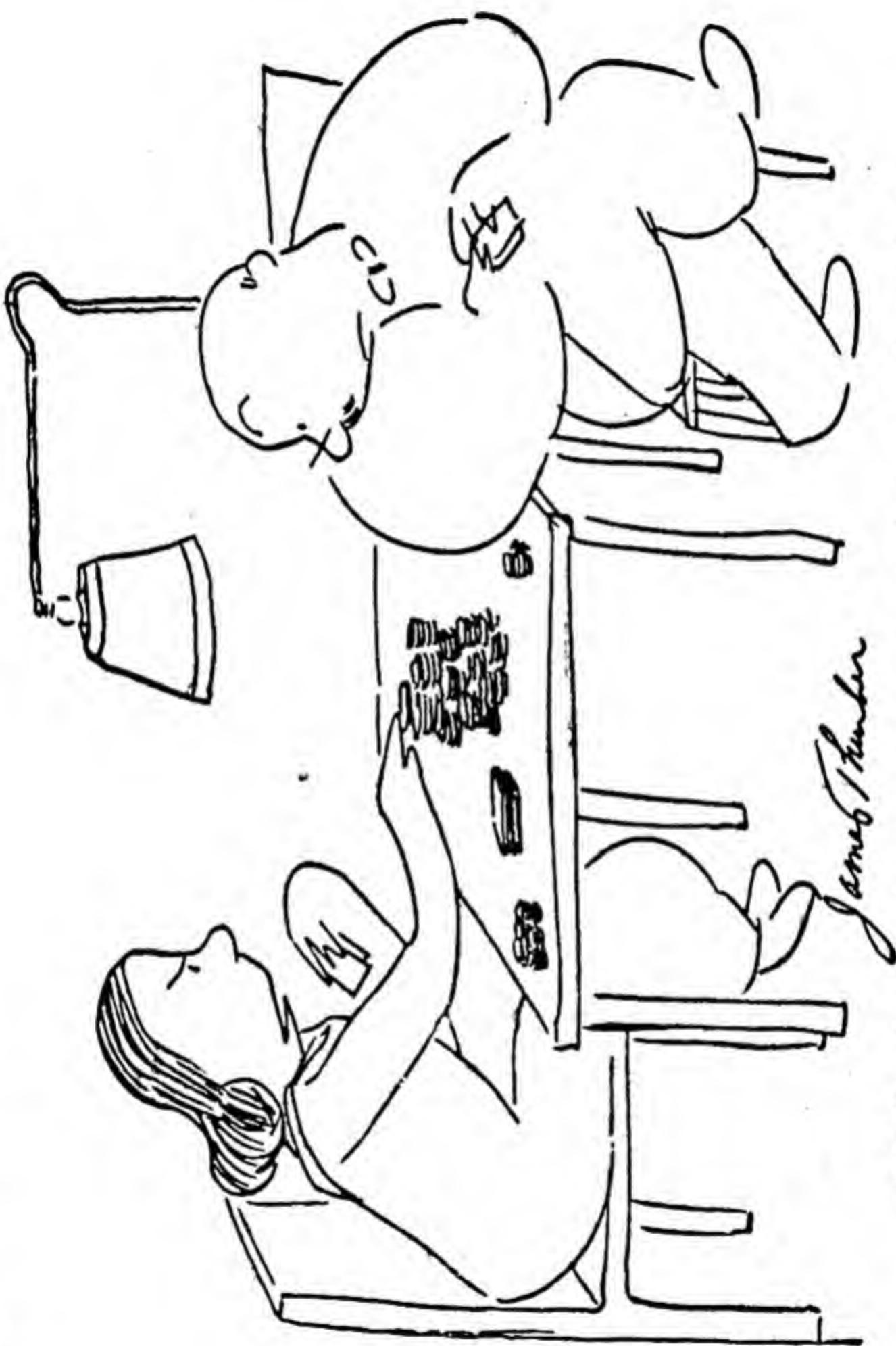


"I come from haunts of coot and hern!"

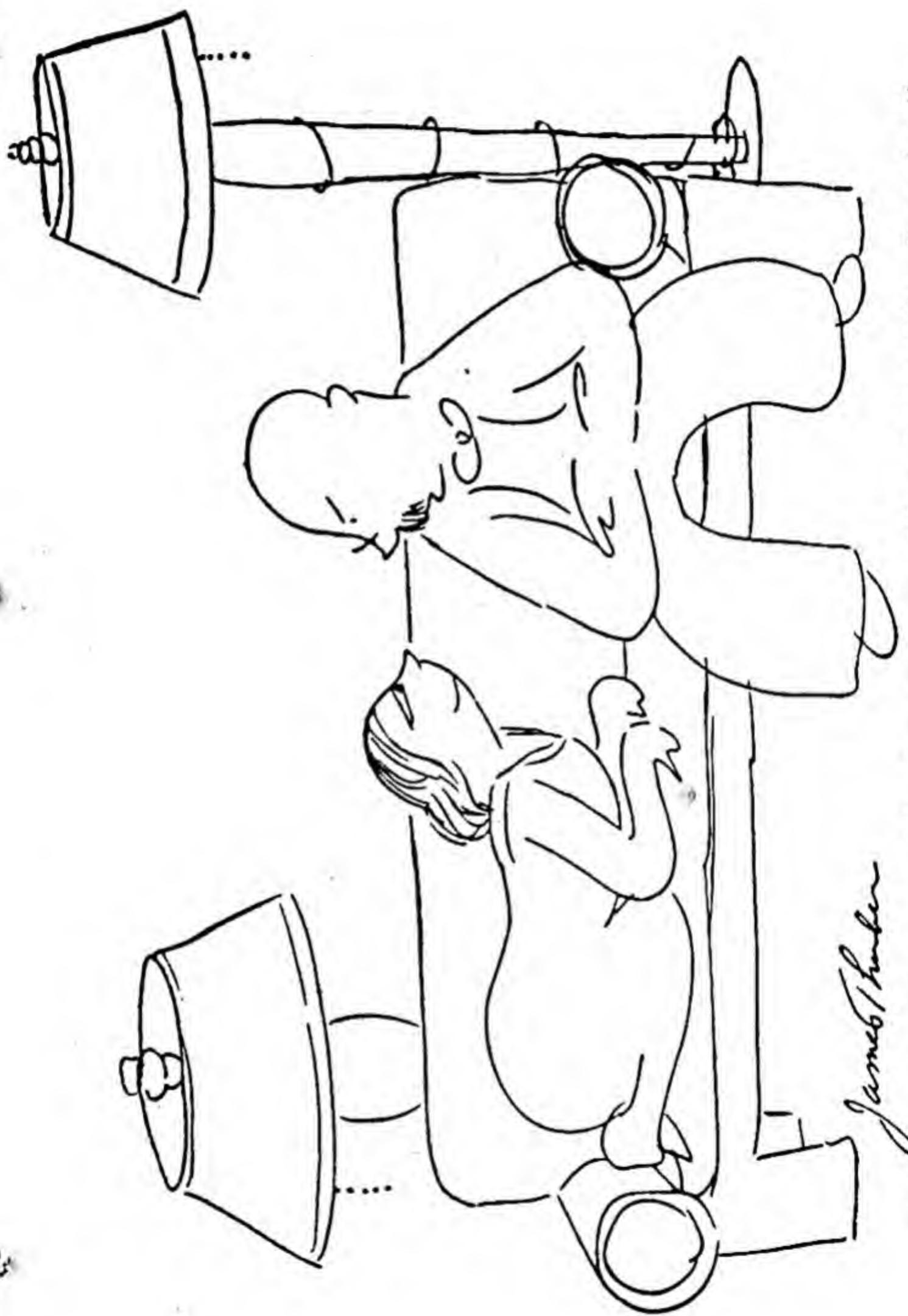




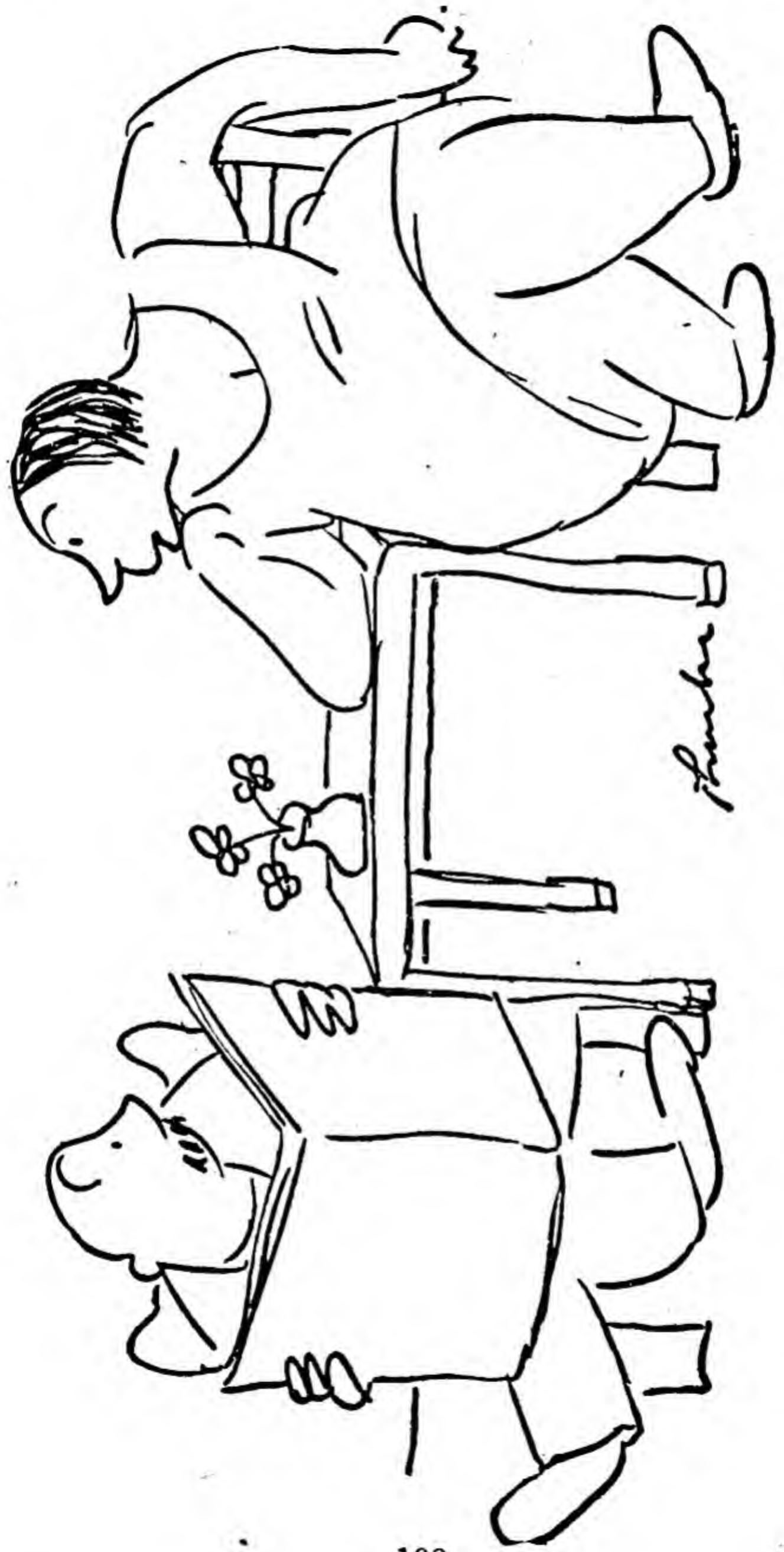
"Now I'm going to go in over your horns!"



"Why do you keep raising me when you know I'm
bluffing?"



"M" heart has bled a stick of wood since May, 1927, Miss Prentice."



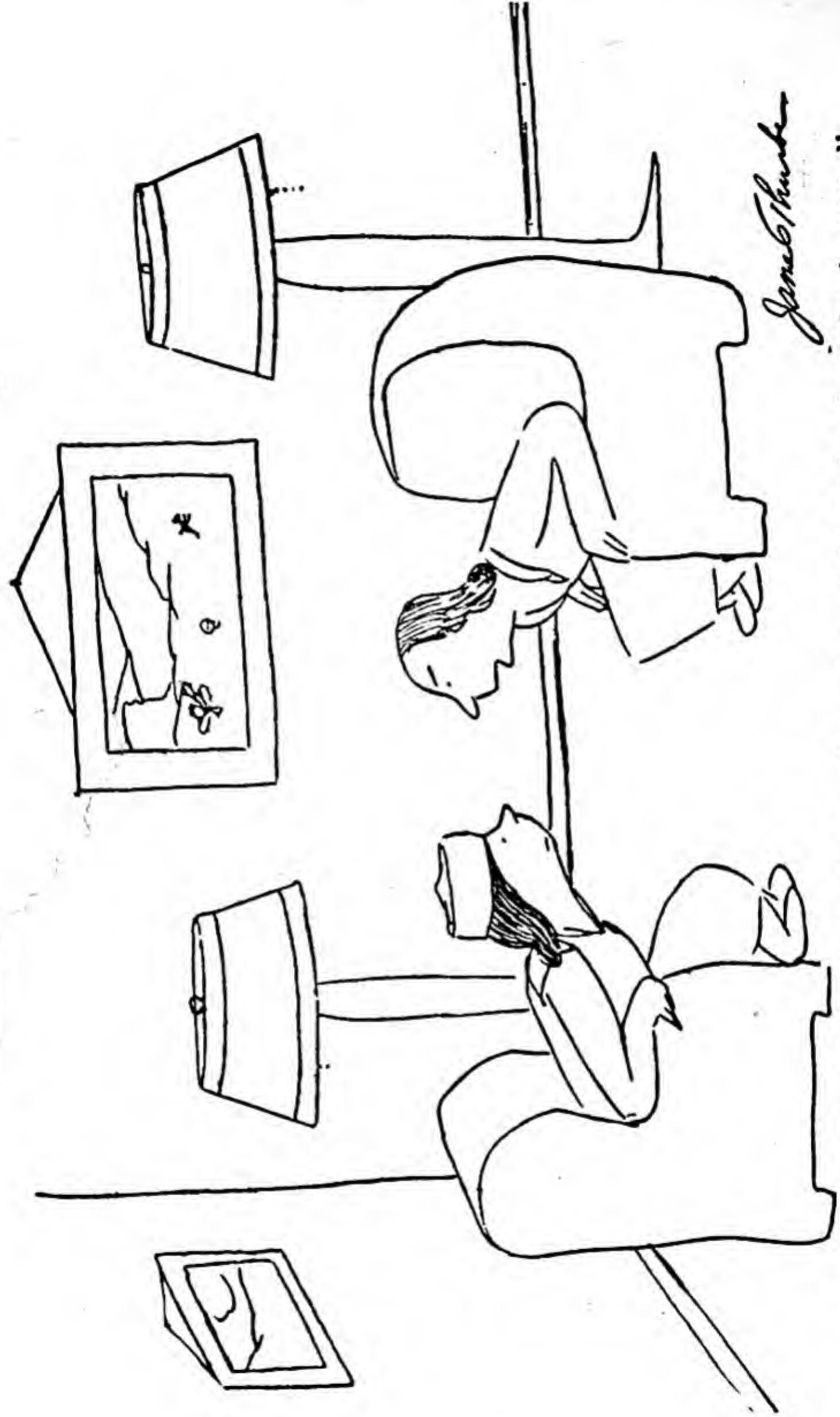
"What ever became of the Socialist Party?"



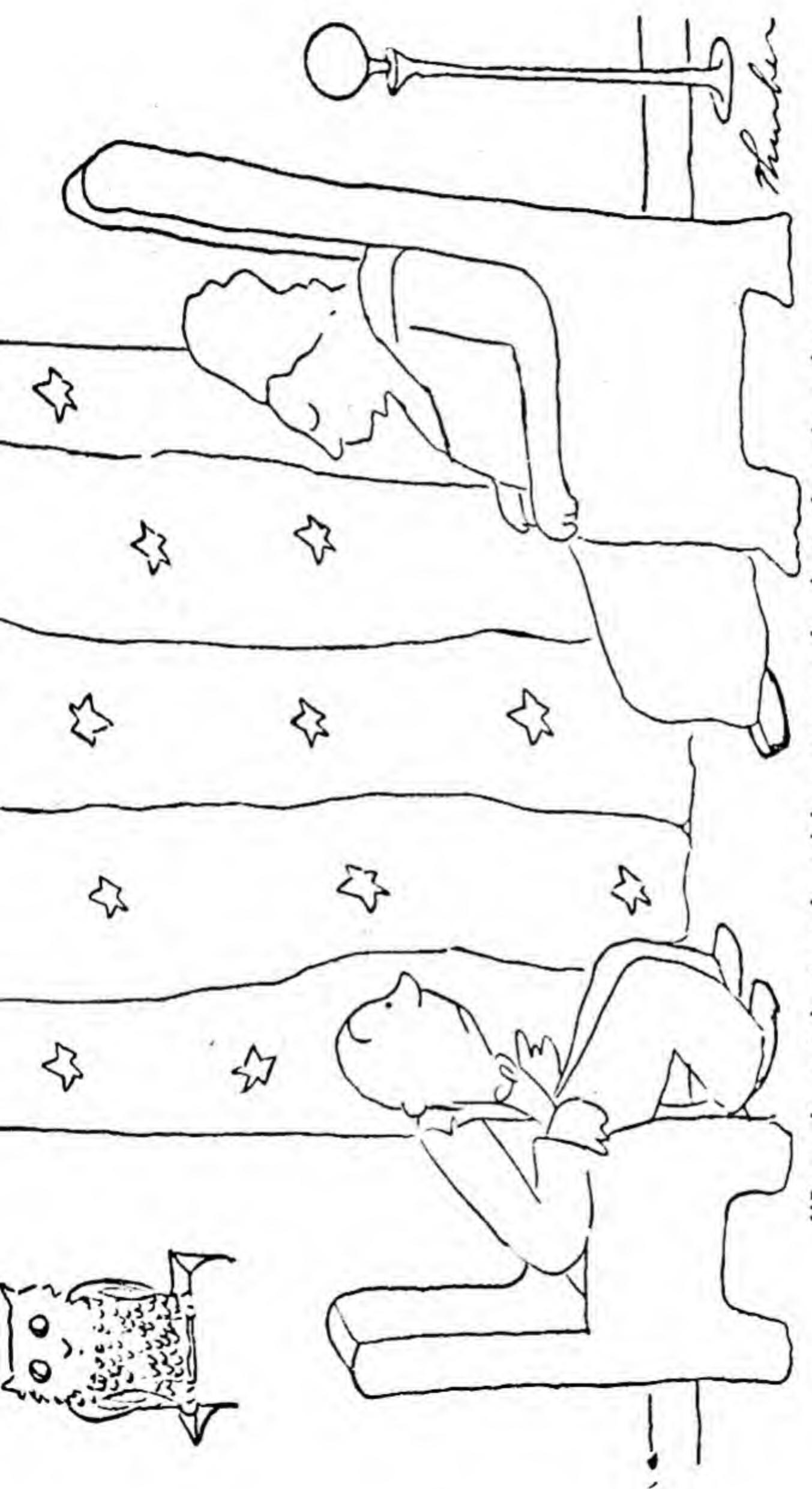
thinner



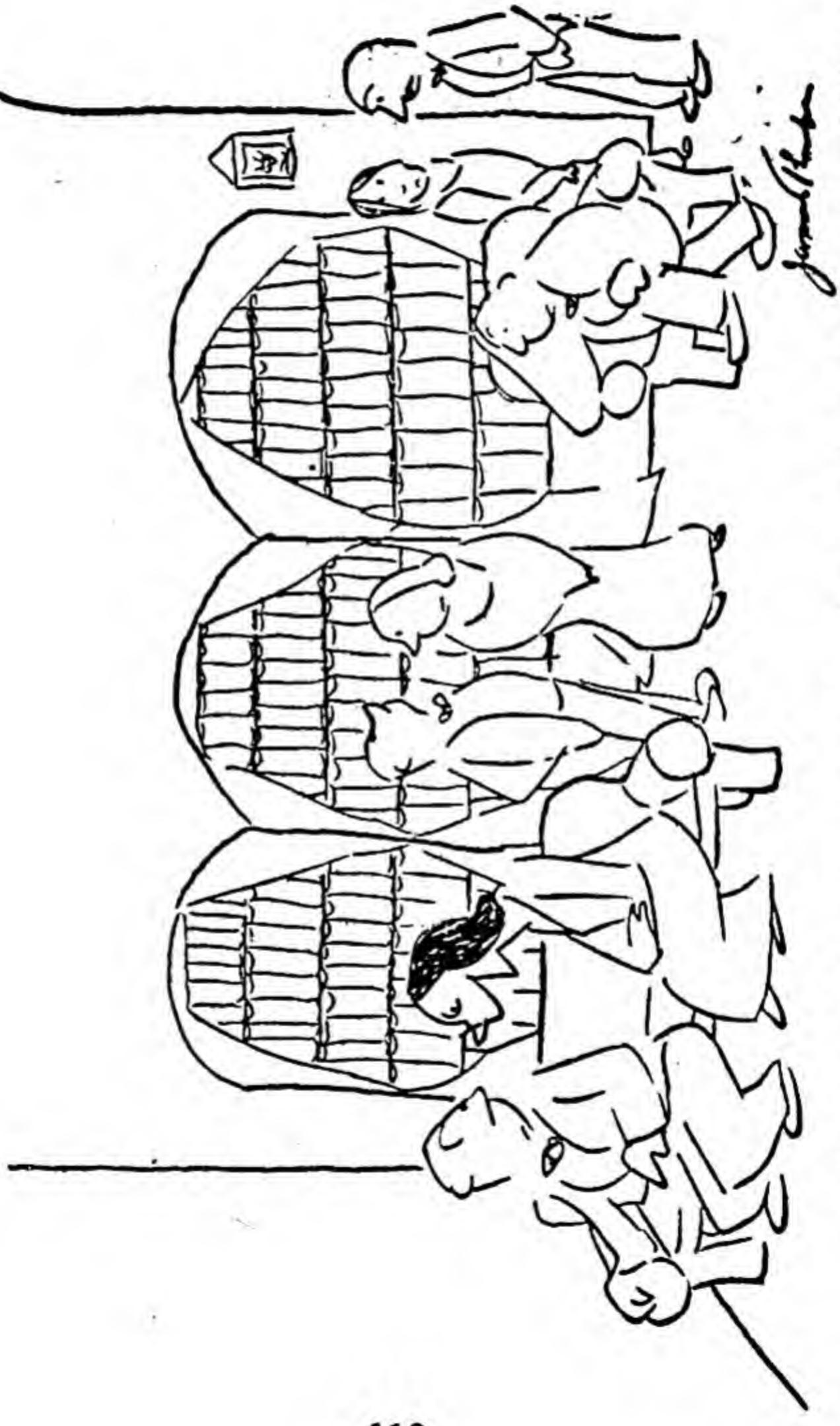
"Lippmann scares me this morning."



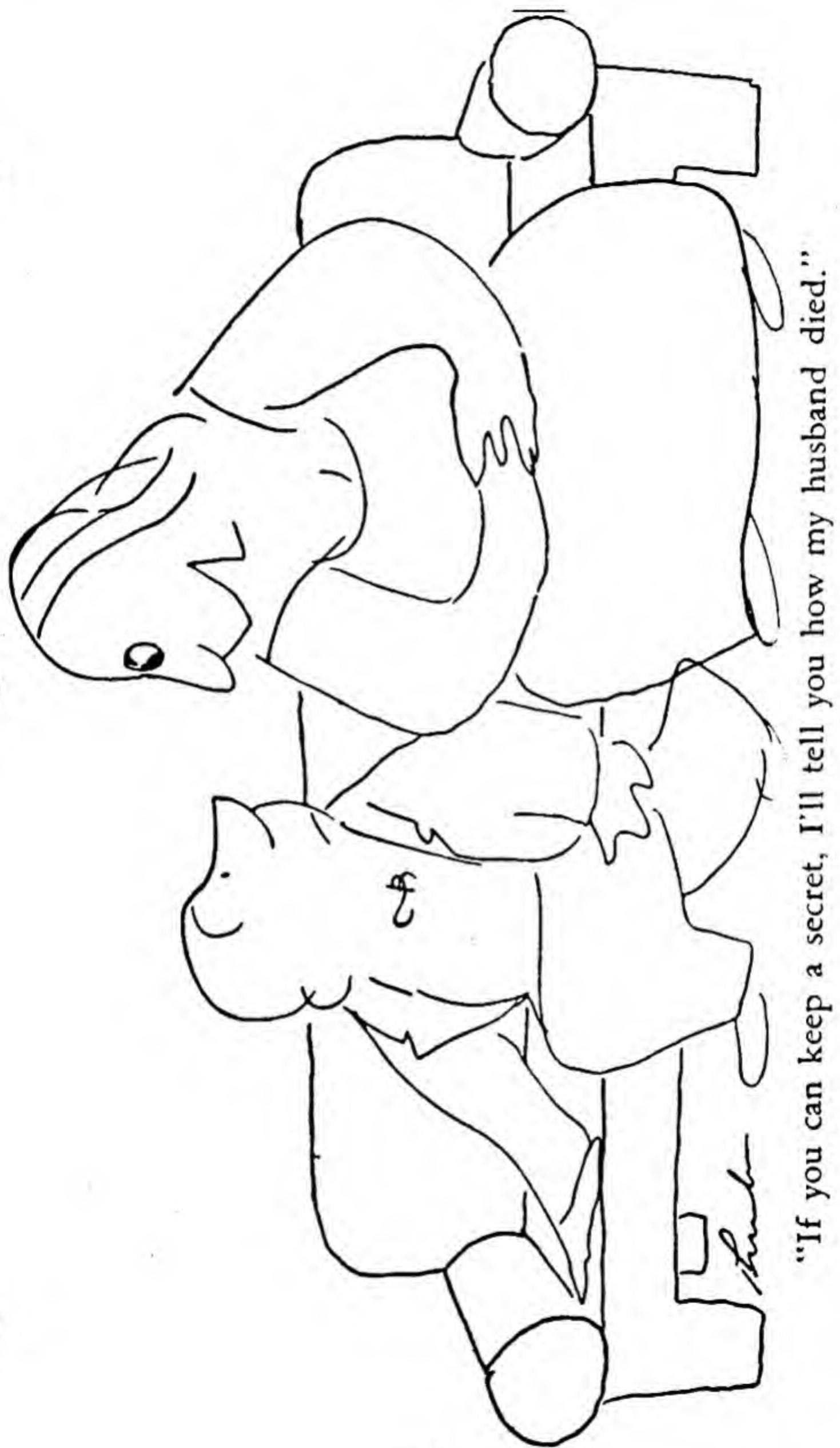
"I say she used to be no better than she ought to be, but she is now."



"I can't get in touch with your uncle, but there's a horse
here that wants to say hello."

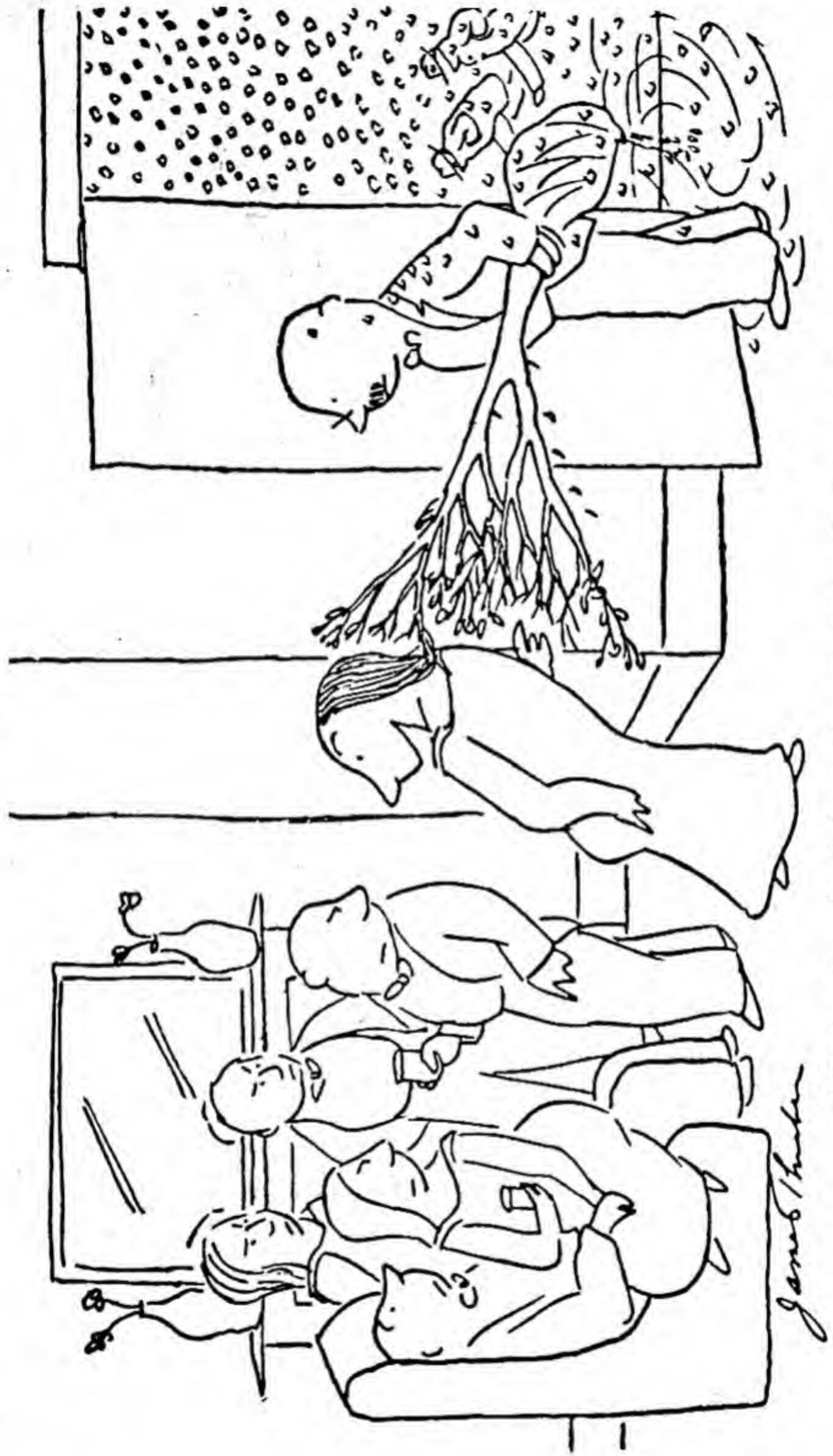


"I'm so glad you're a writer—I'm just full of themes and ideas."



"If you can keep a secret, I'll tell you how my husband died."

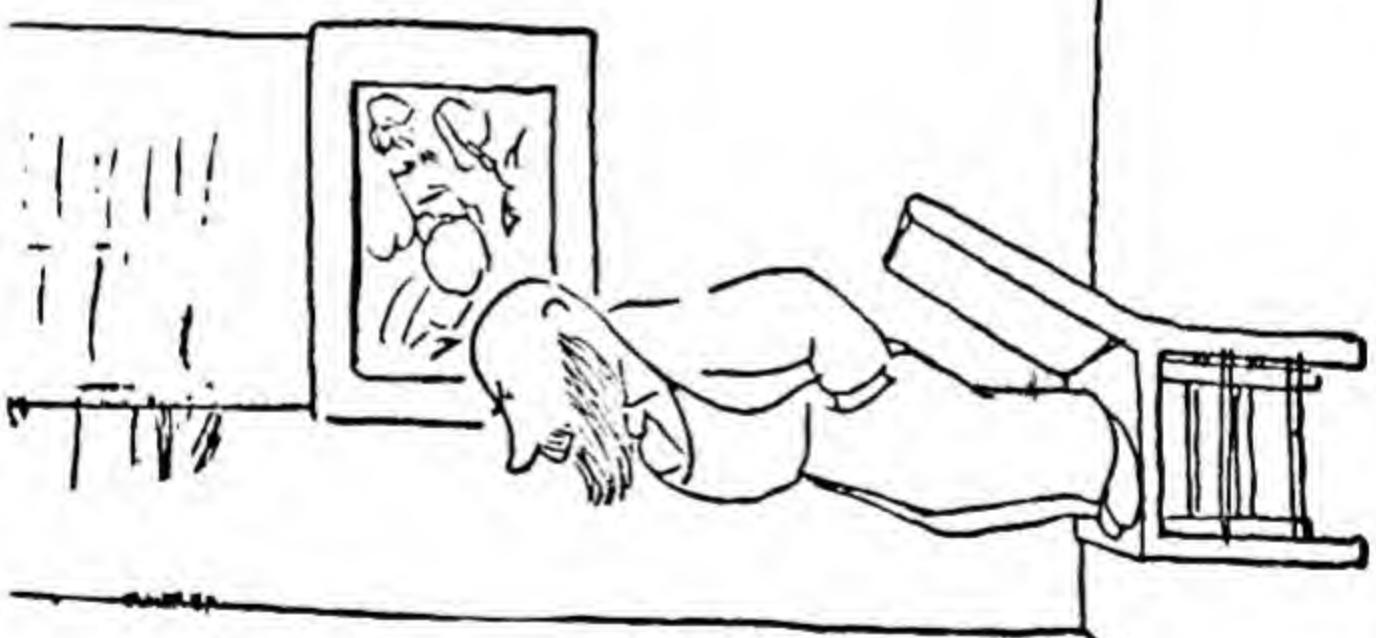
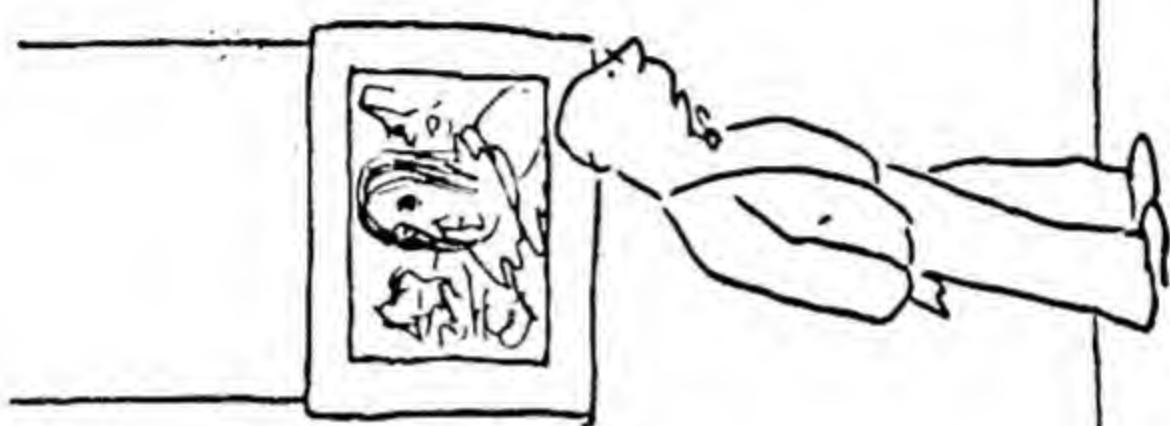




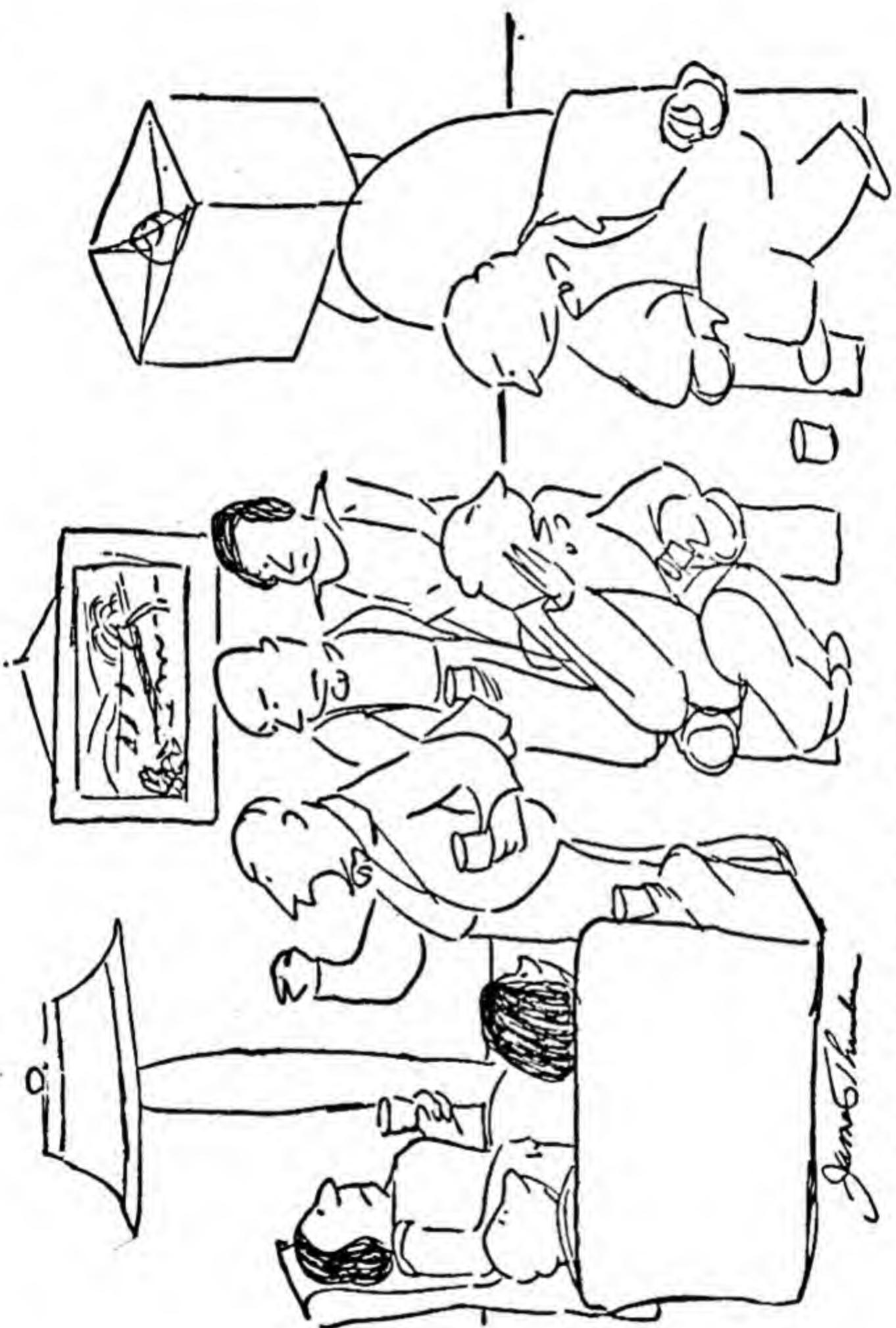
"Every day is Arbor Day to Mr. Chisholm."



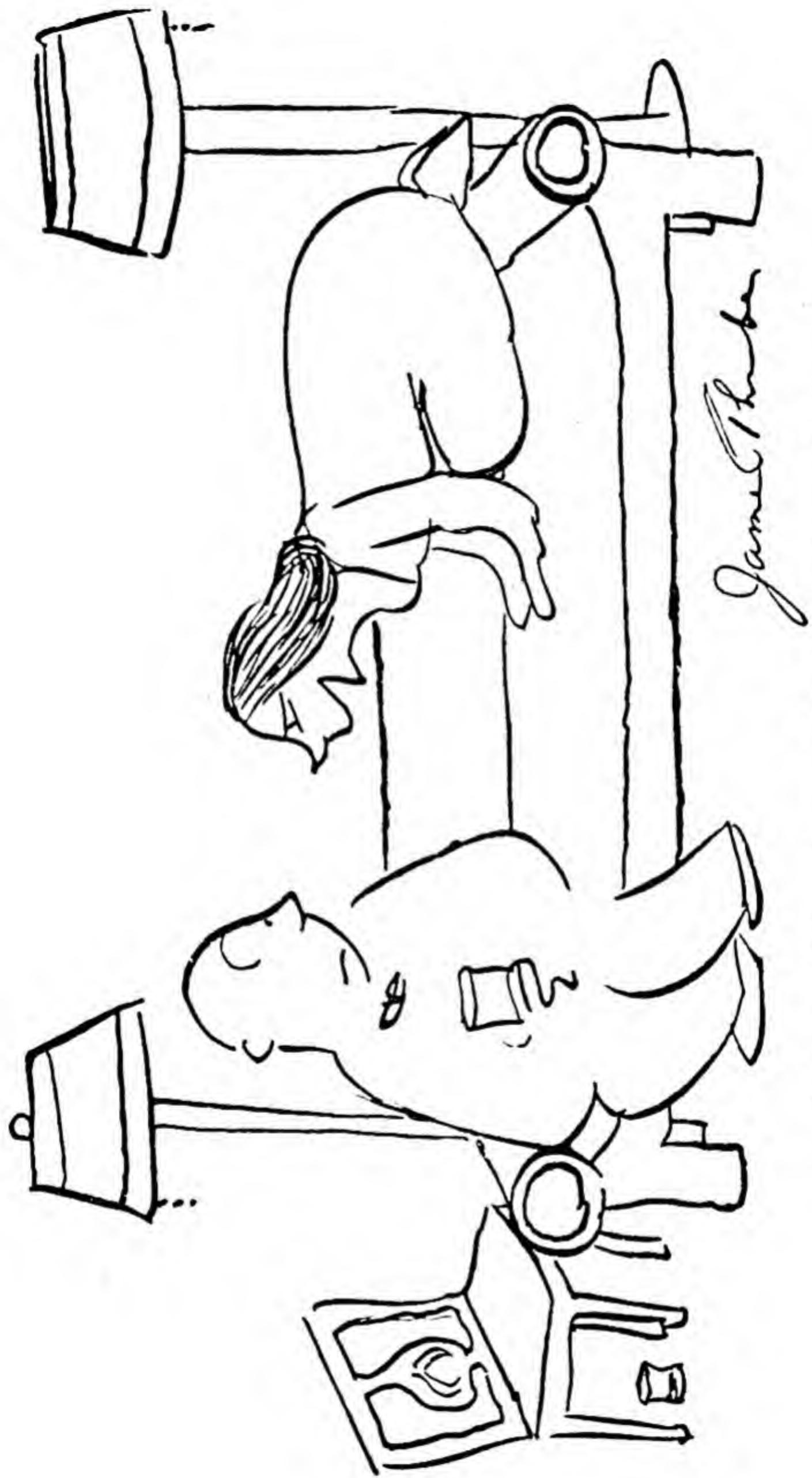
Janet Schenk



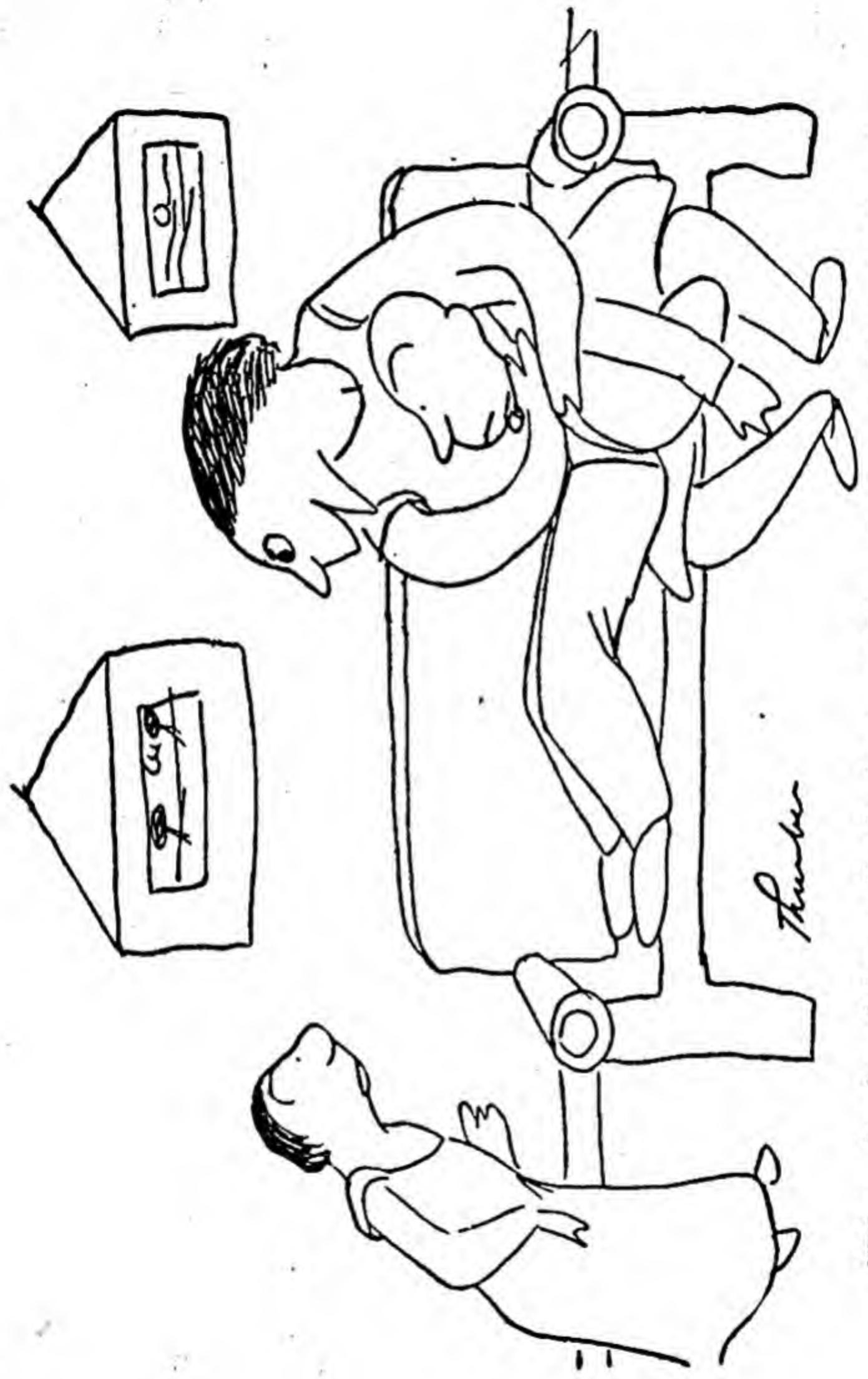
"He knows all about art, but he doesn't know what he likes."



"One of us ought to be a Boswell, taking all this down."

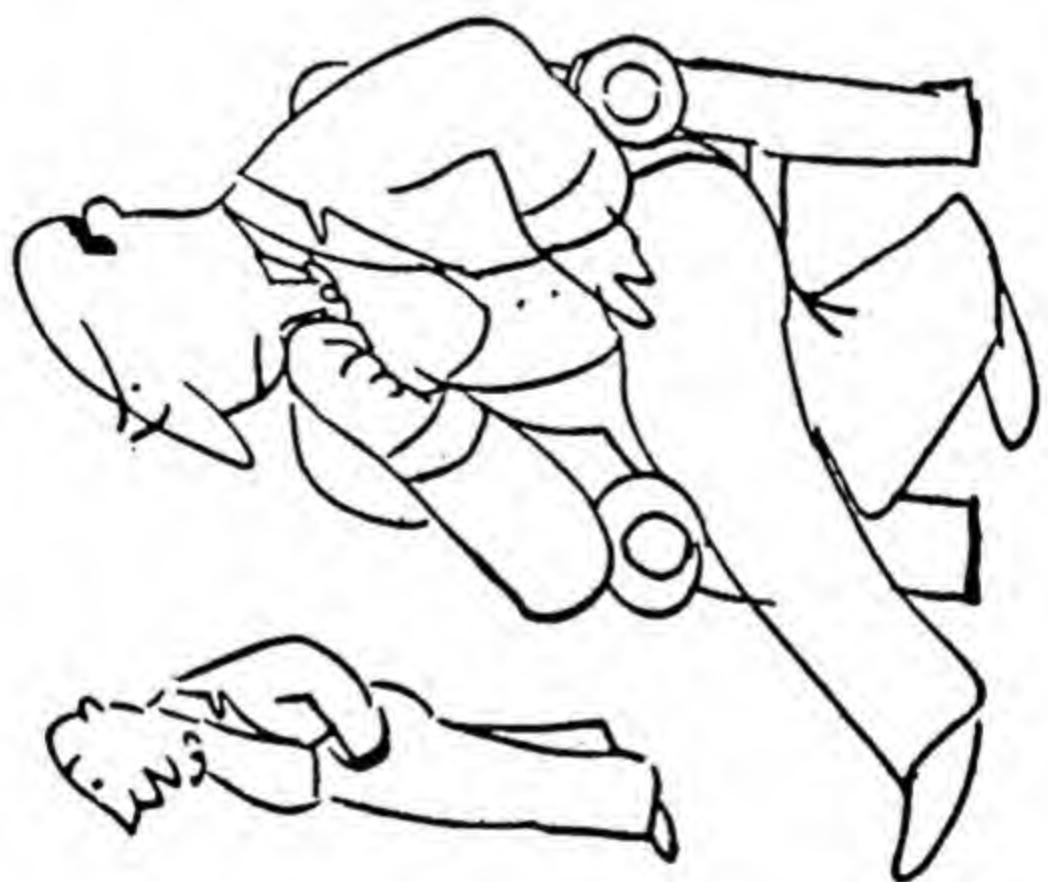
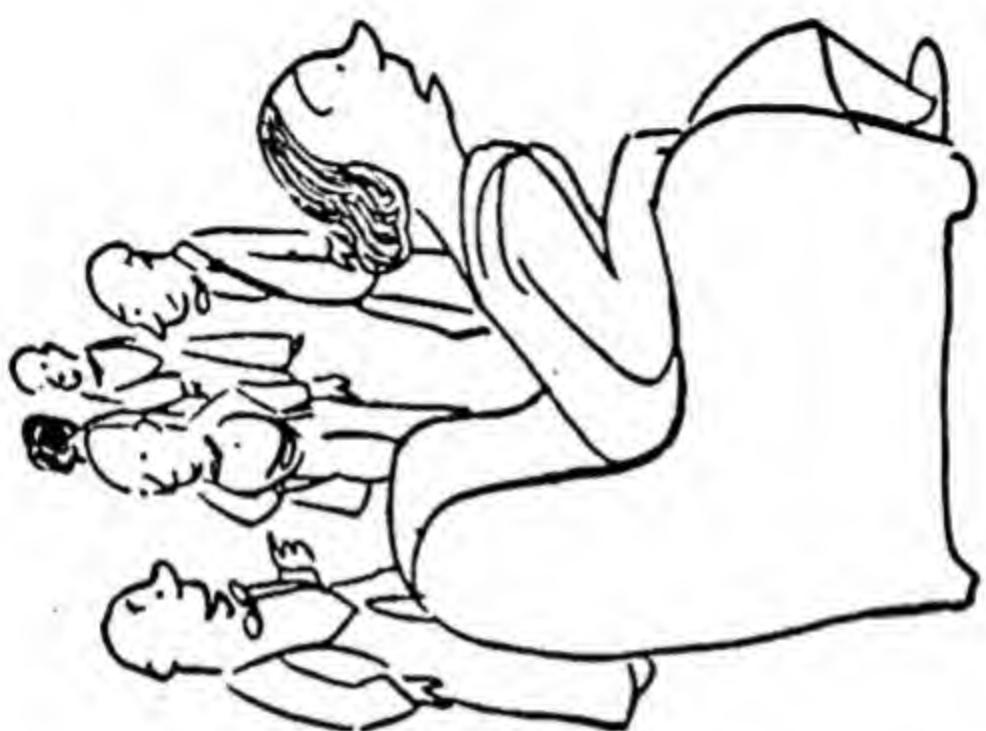
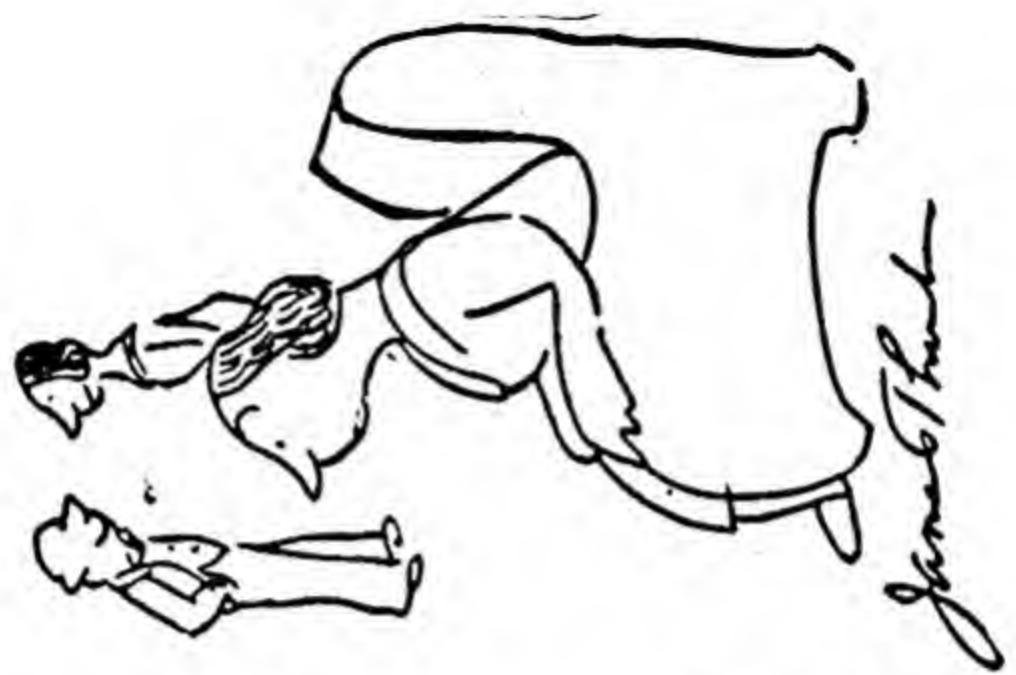


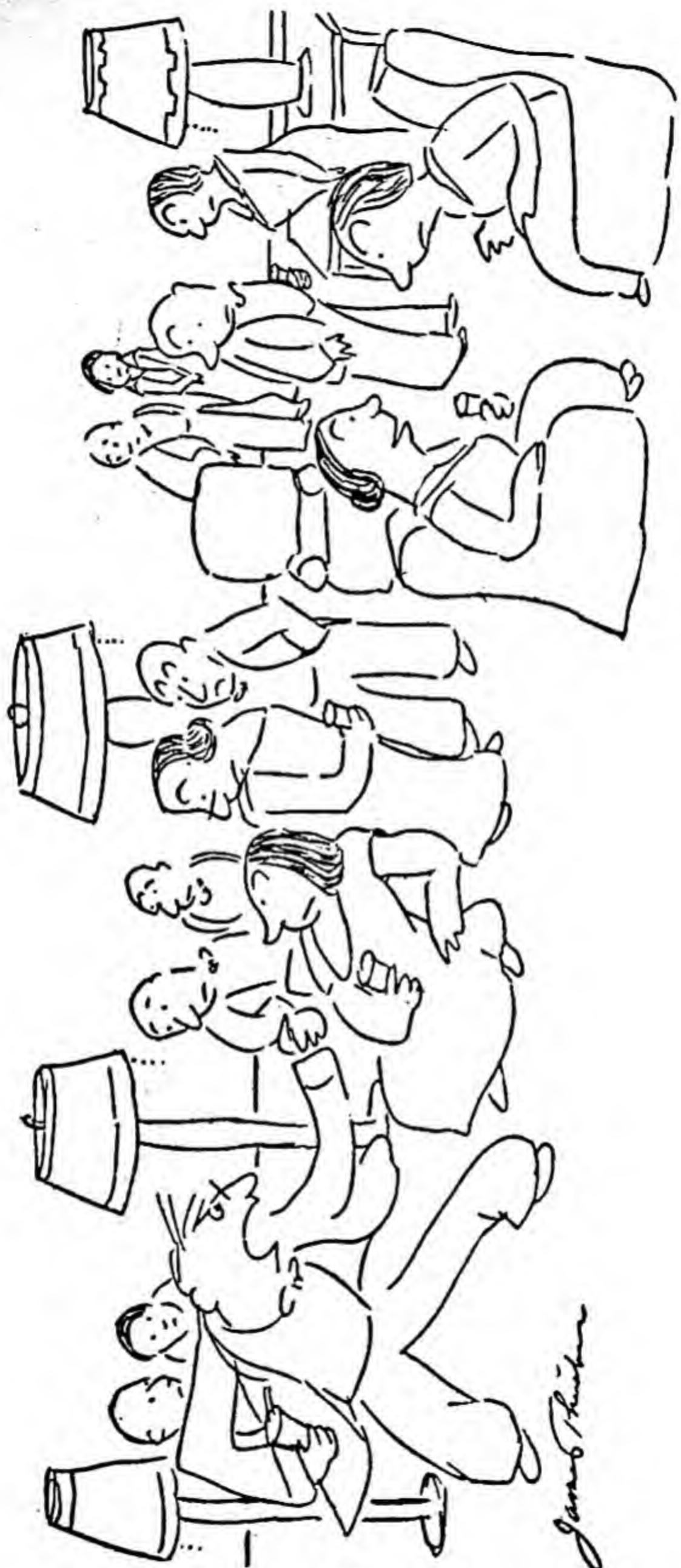
"The trouble with me is I can never say no."



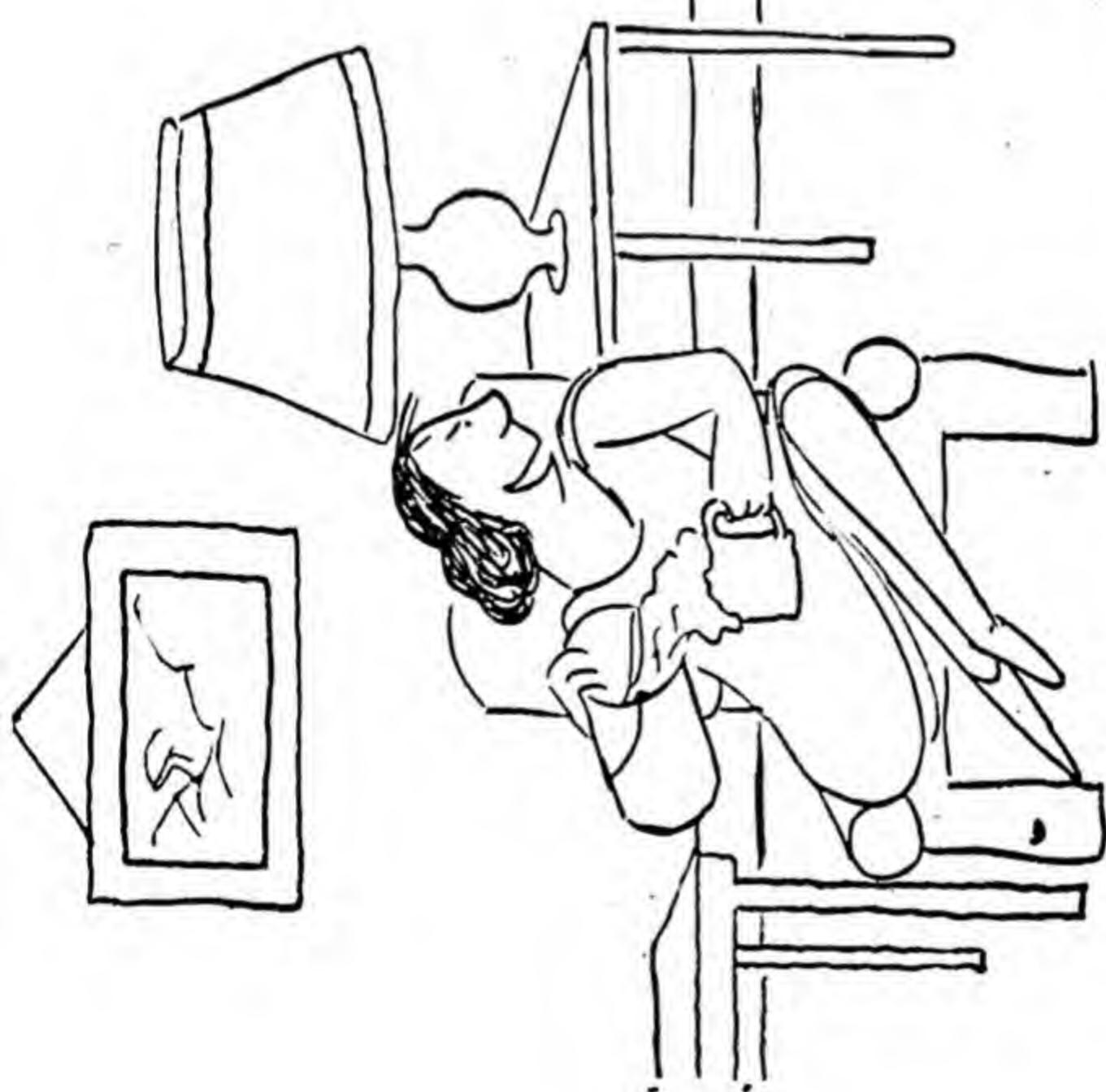
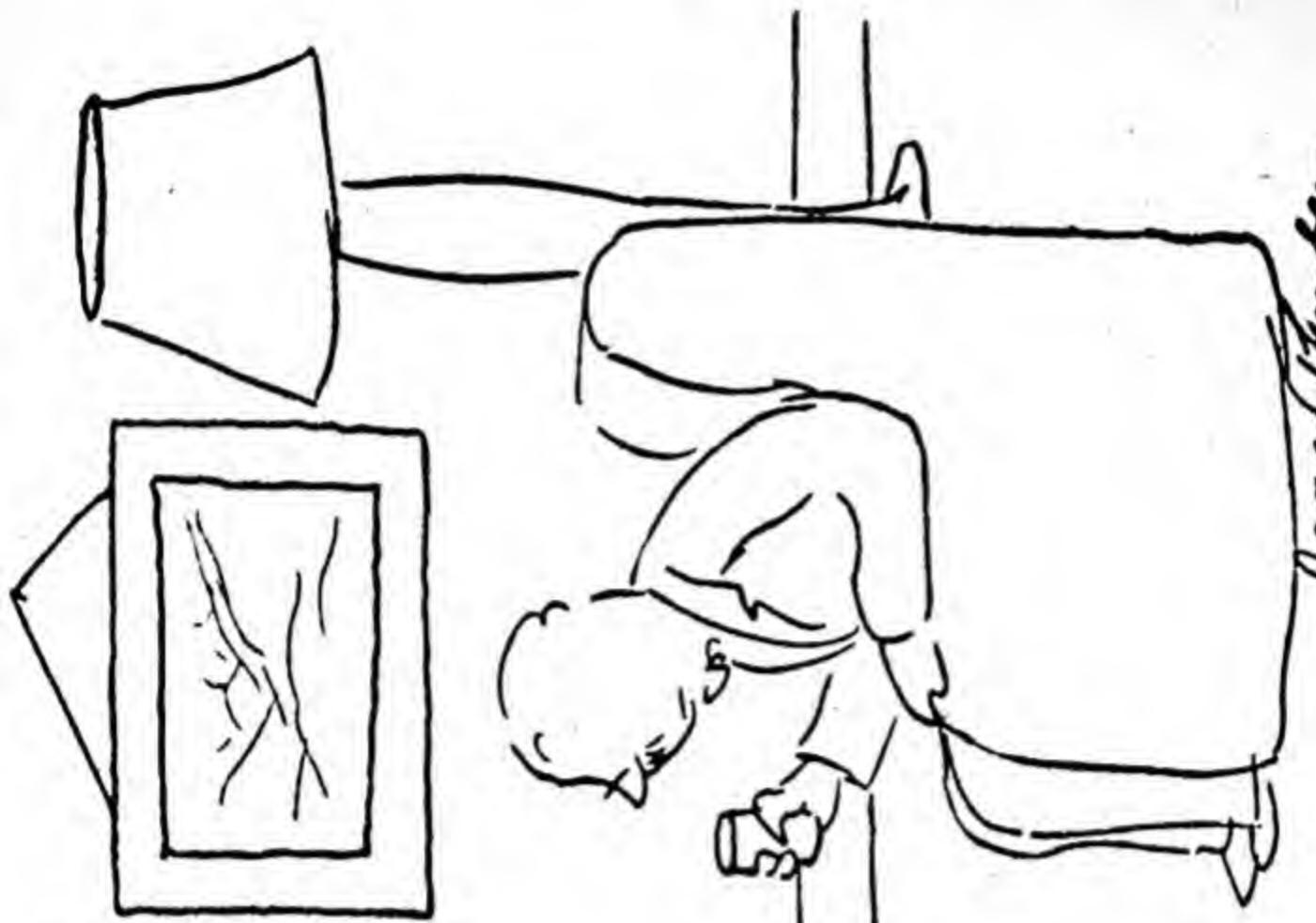
"Your husband has talked about nothing but you, Mrs. Miller."

"He doesn't know anything except facts."

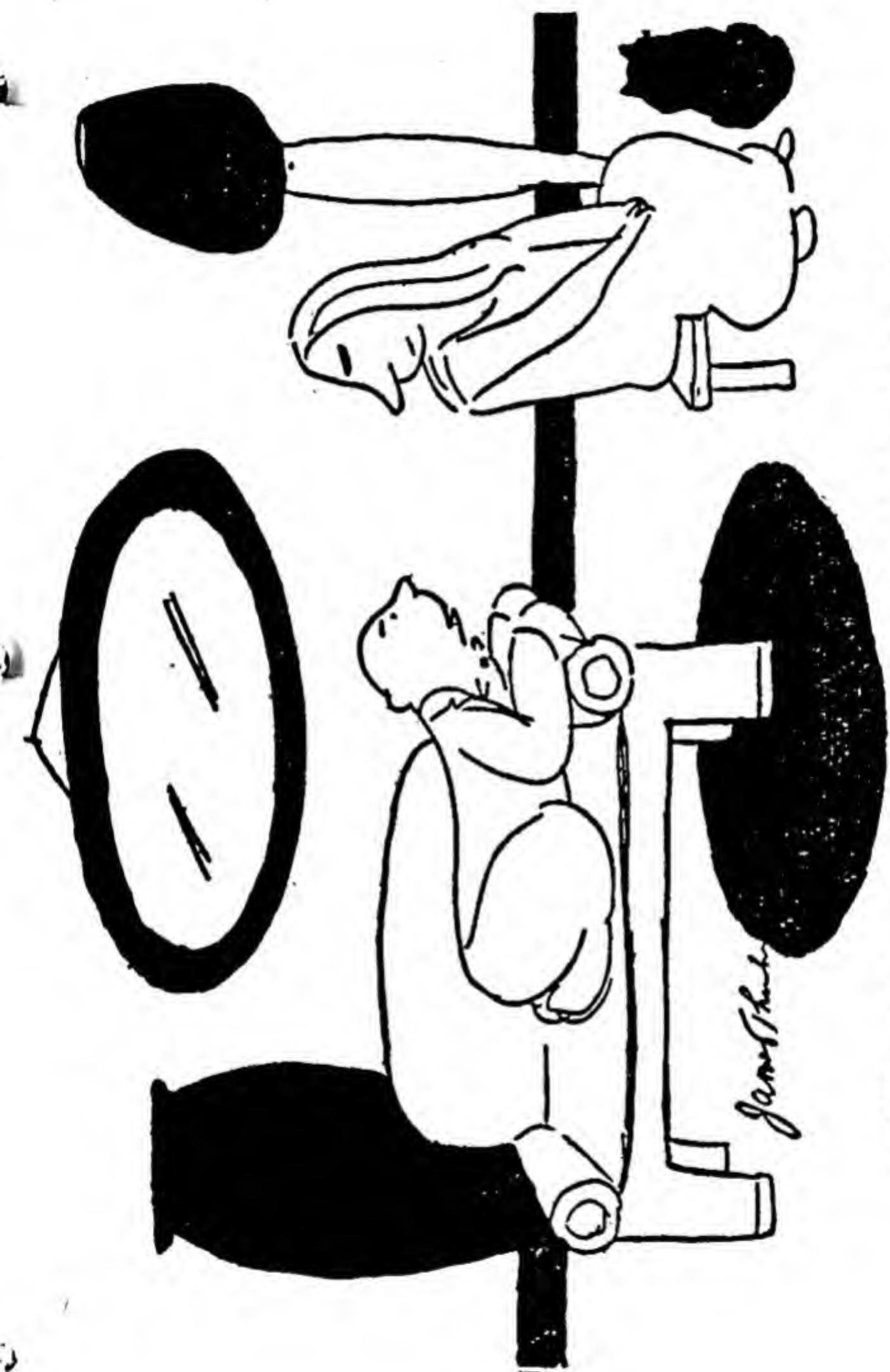




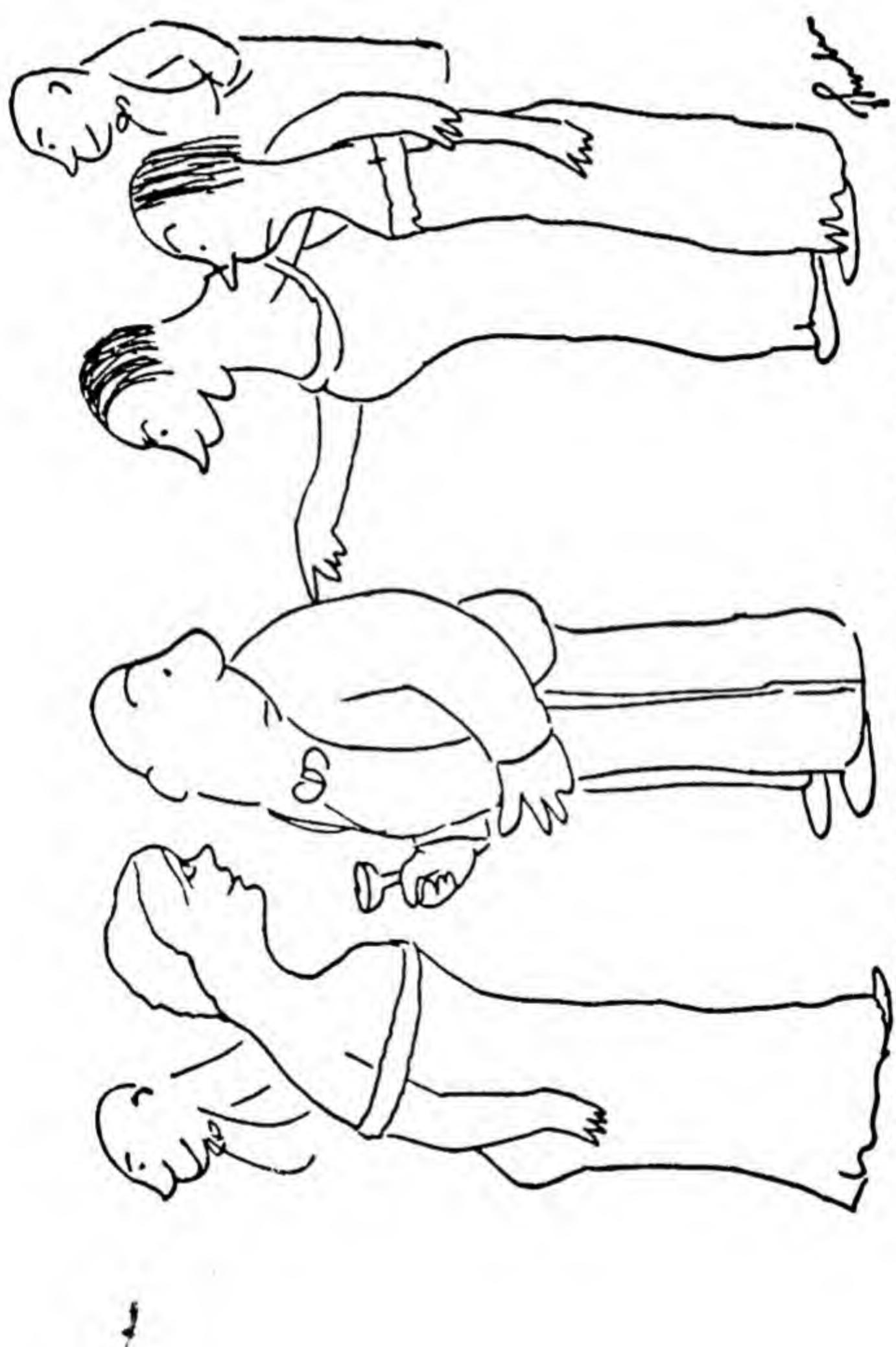
"He hates people."



"Laissez faire and let laissez faire is what I believe in."

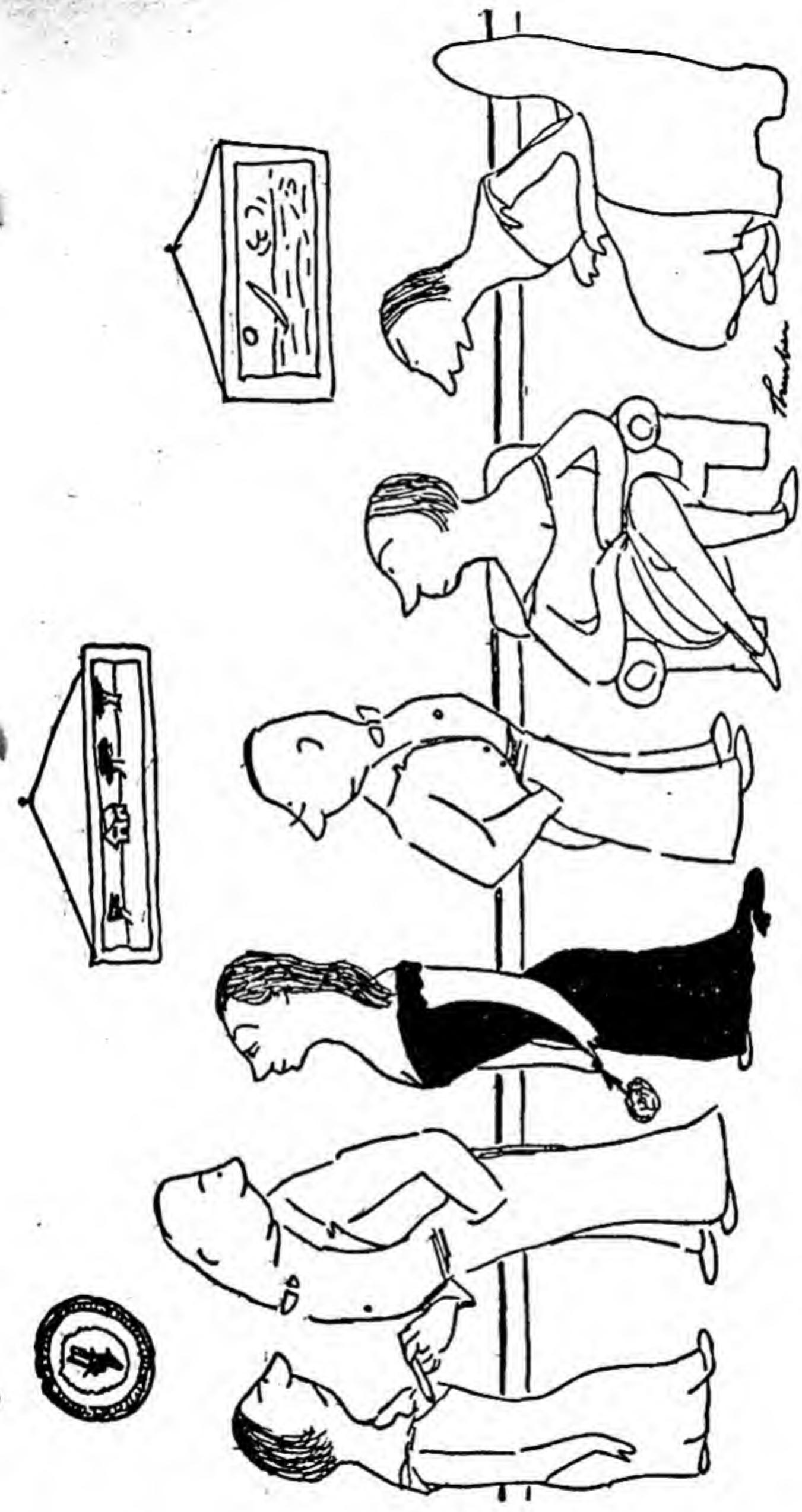


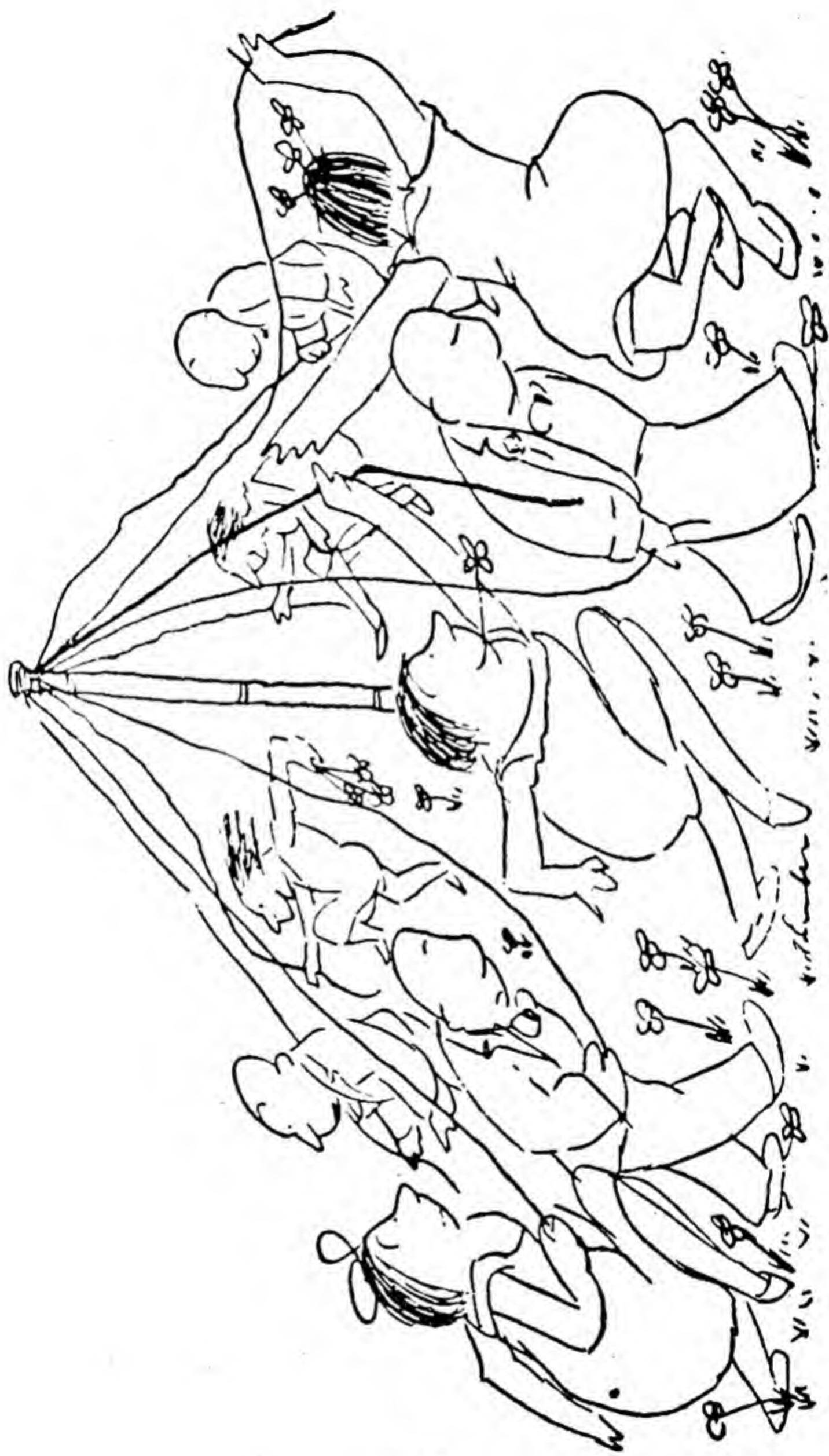
"What do you want to be inscrutable *for*, Marcia?"



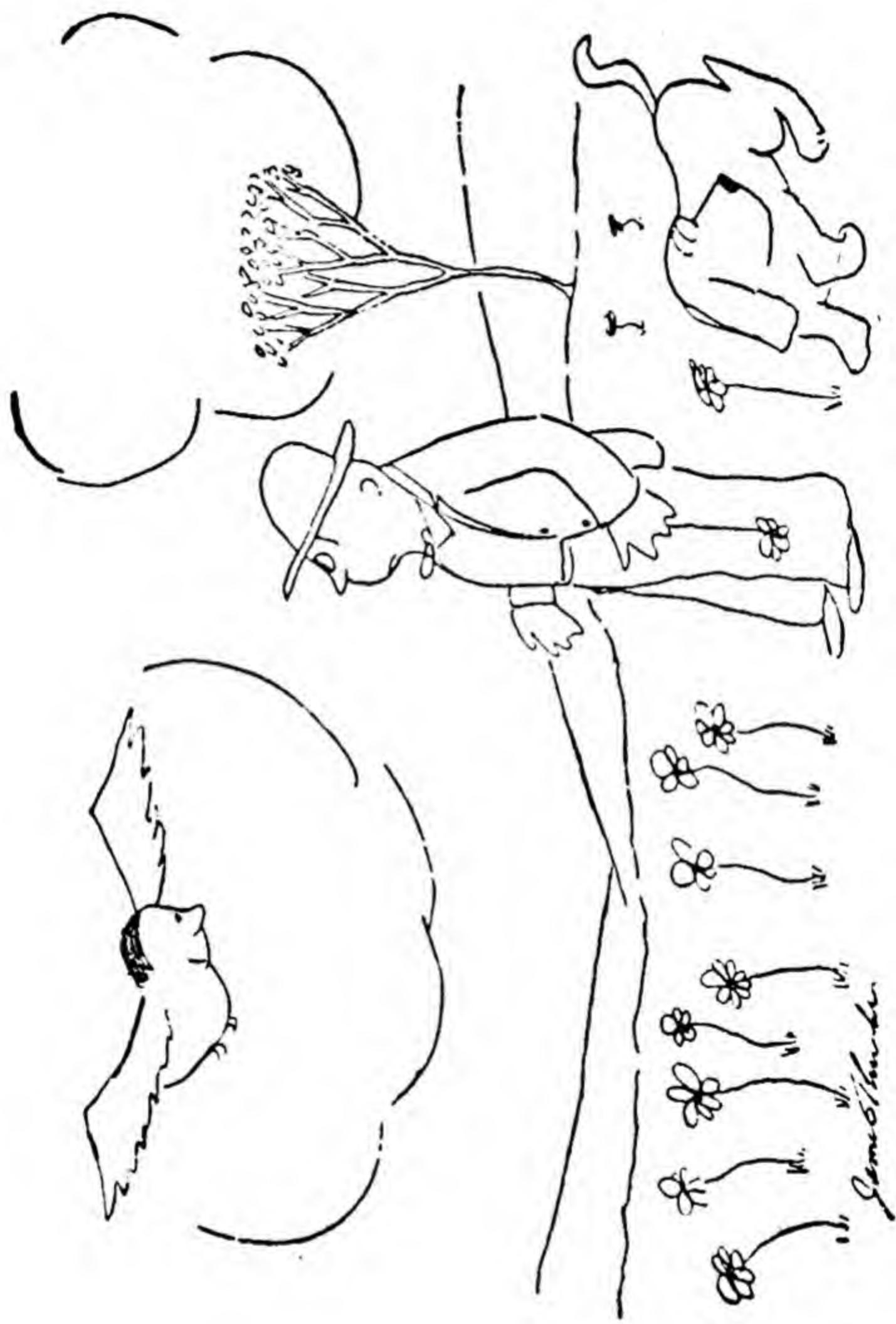
"This is Miss Jones, Doctor—I want you to cheer her up.
She's been through hell recently."

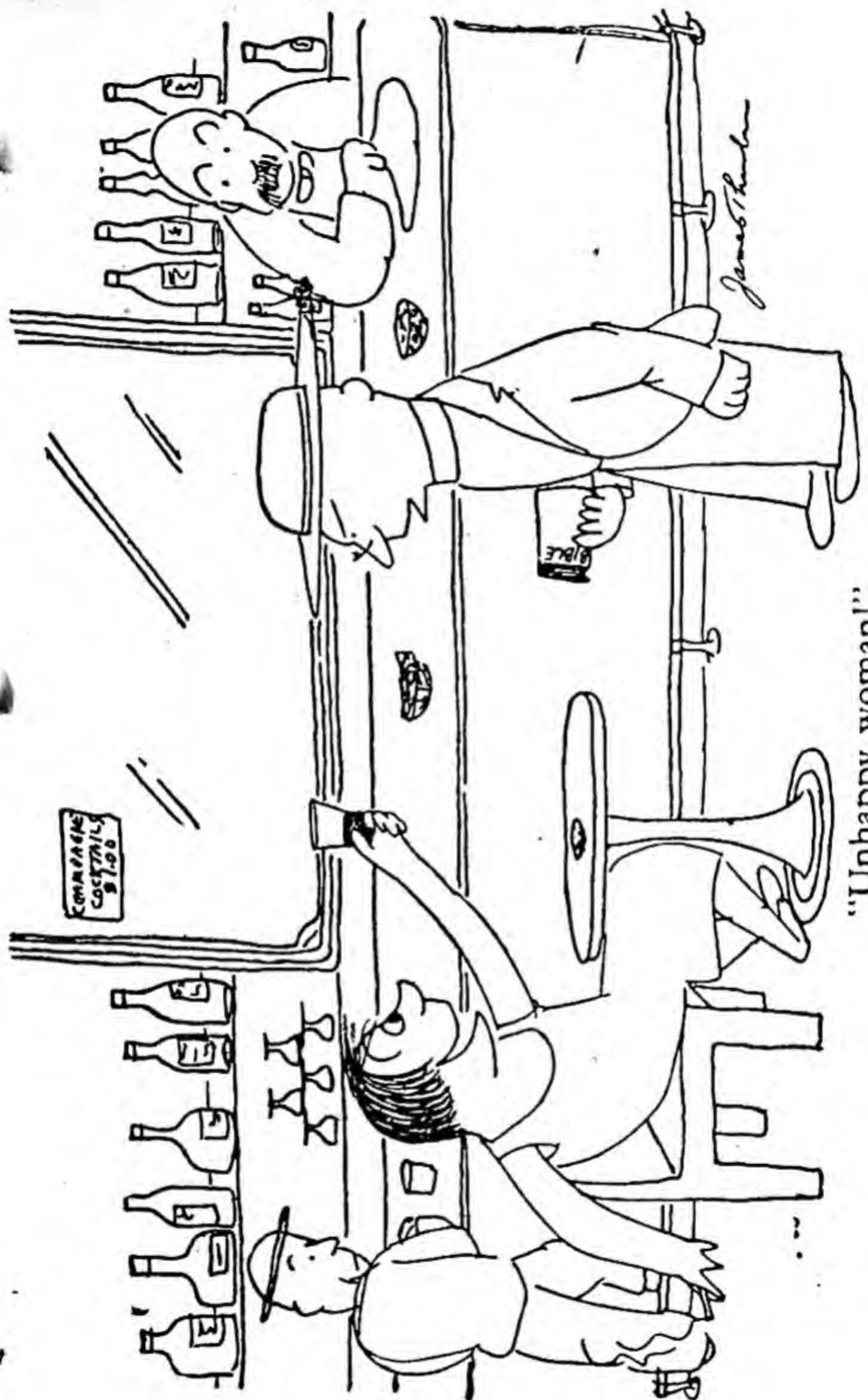
"She's been this way ever since she saw 'Camille.' "



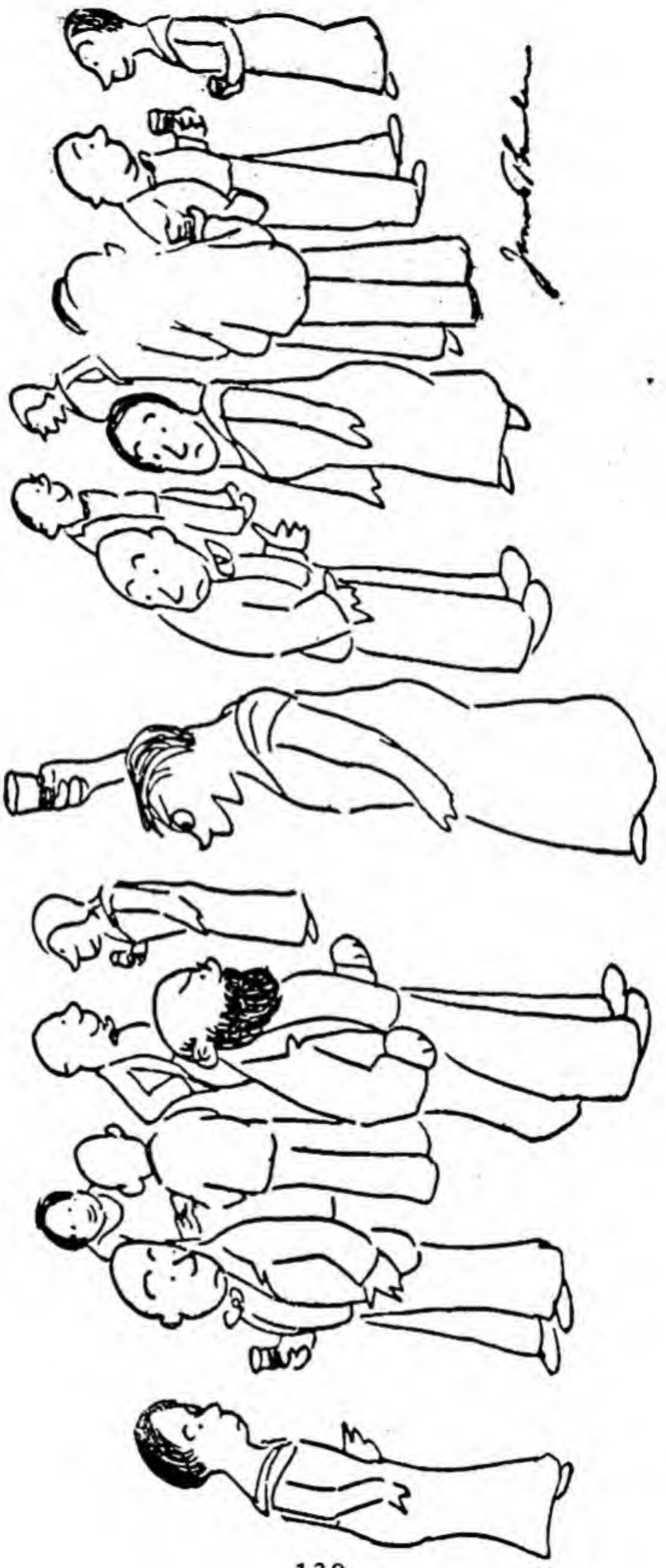






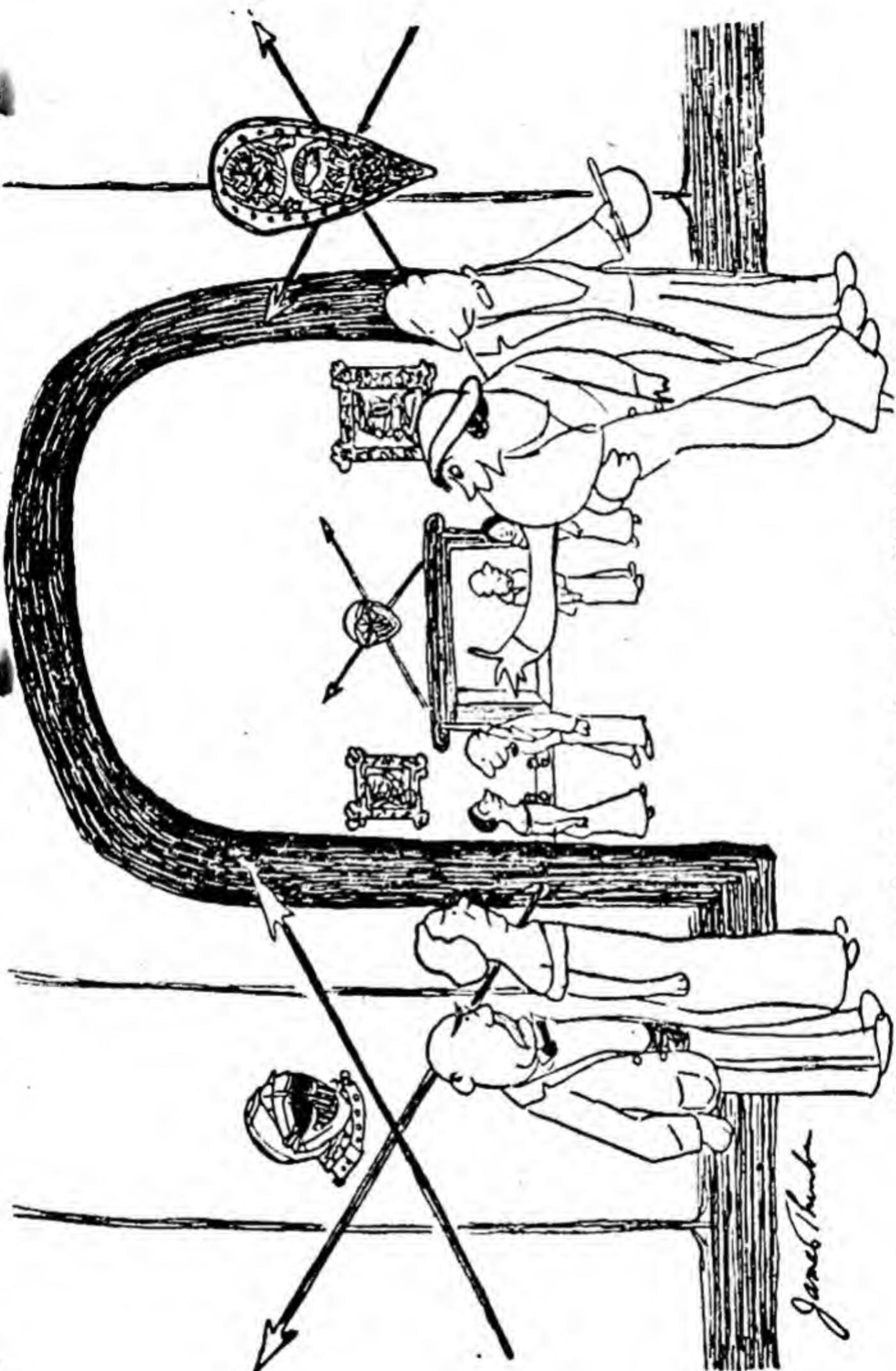


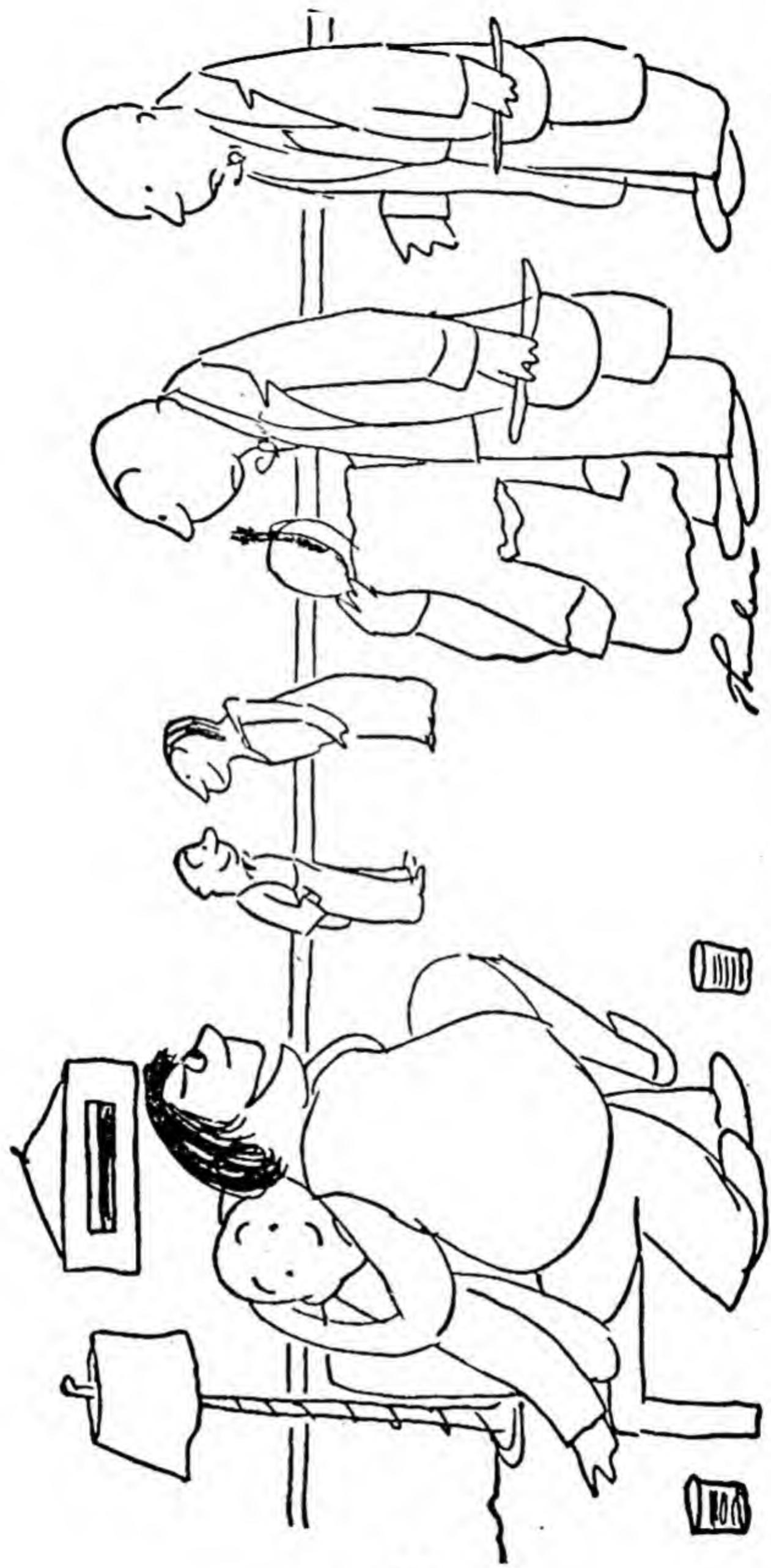
"Unhappy woman!"



"See you at the barricades, Mr. Whitsonby!"

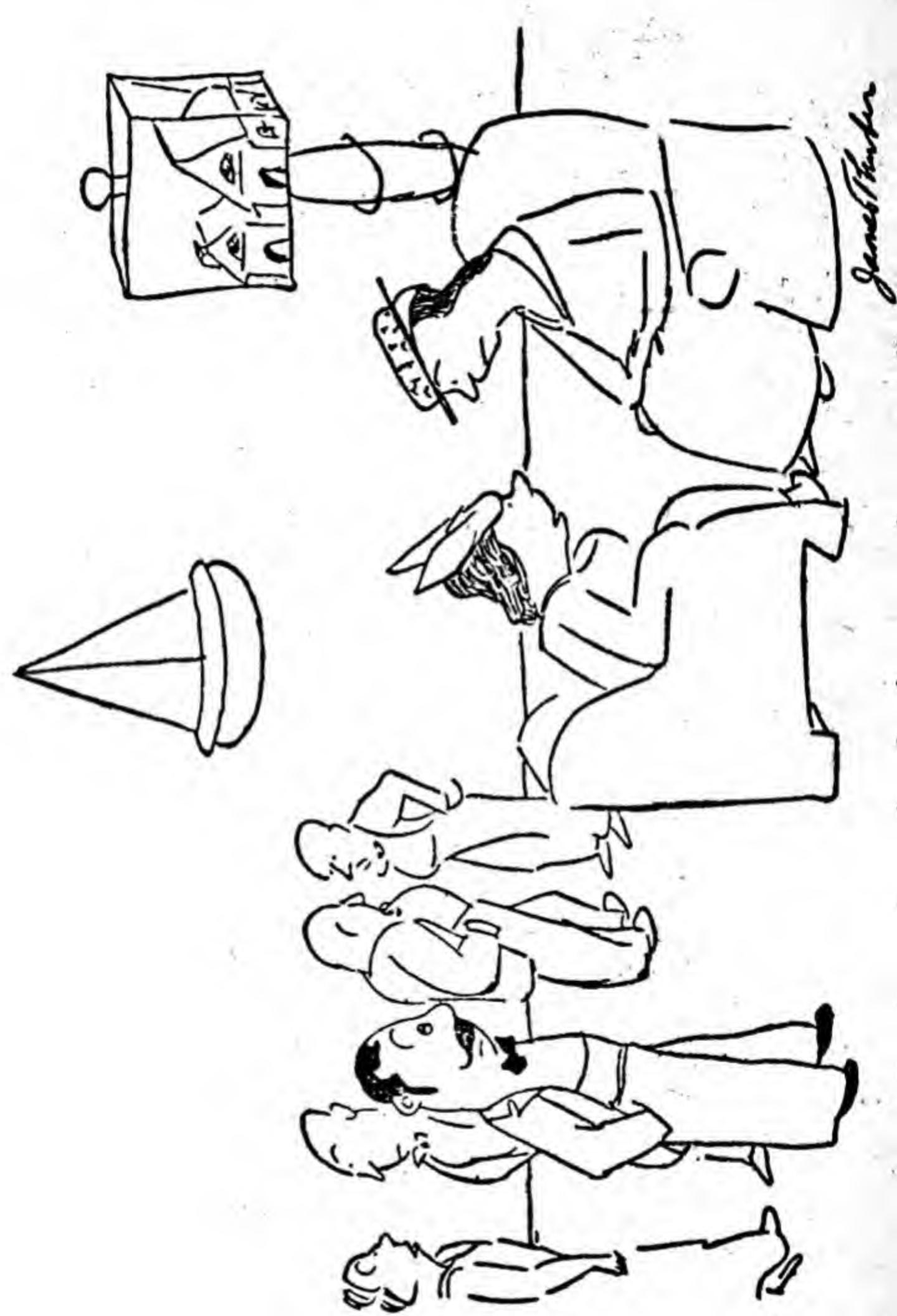
James Thorne

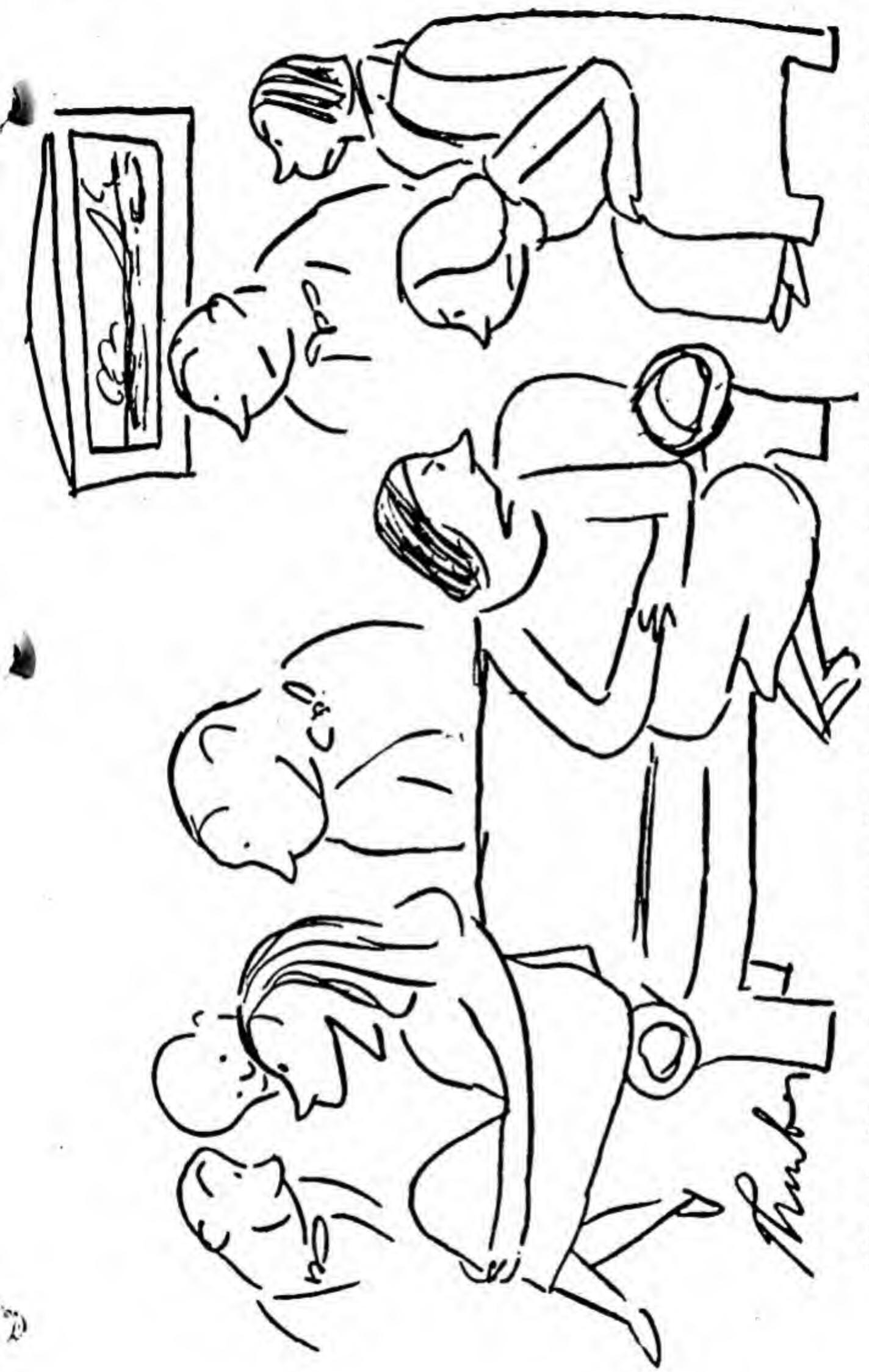




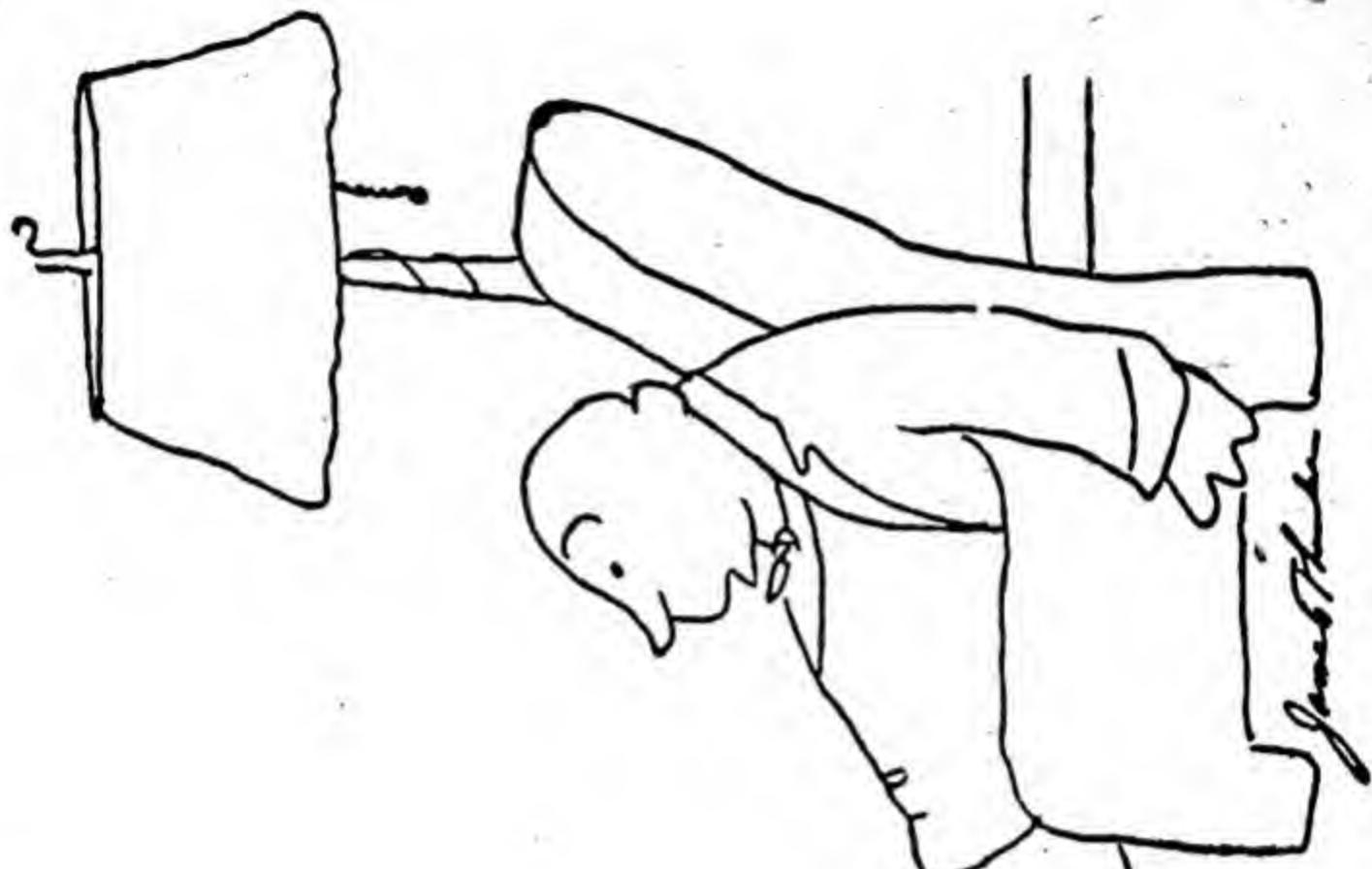


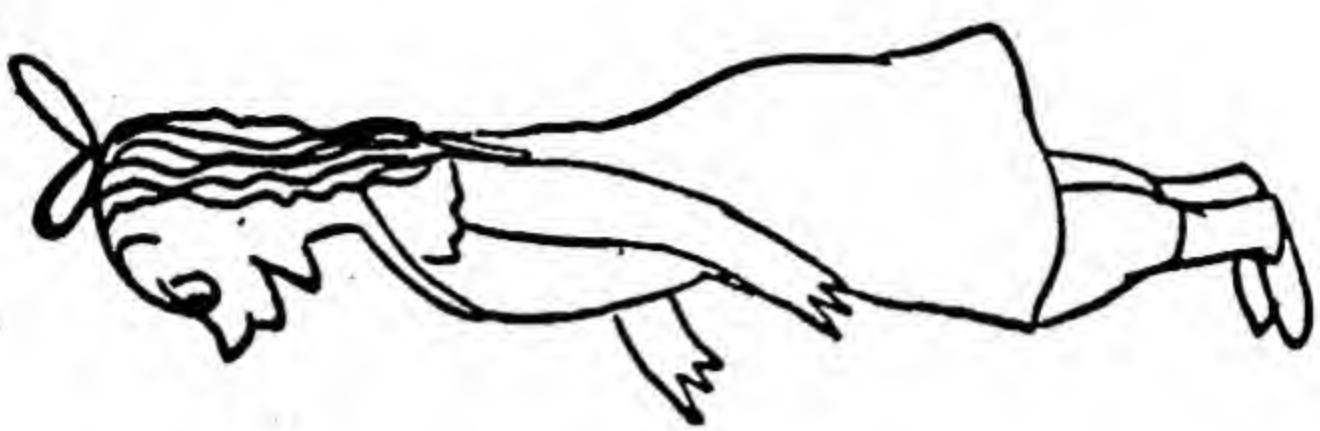
"My wife wants to spend Halloween with her first husband."



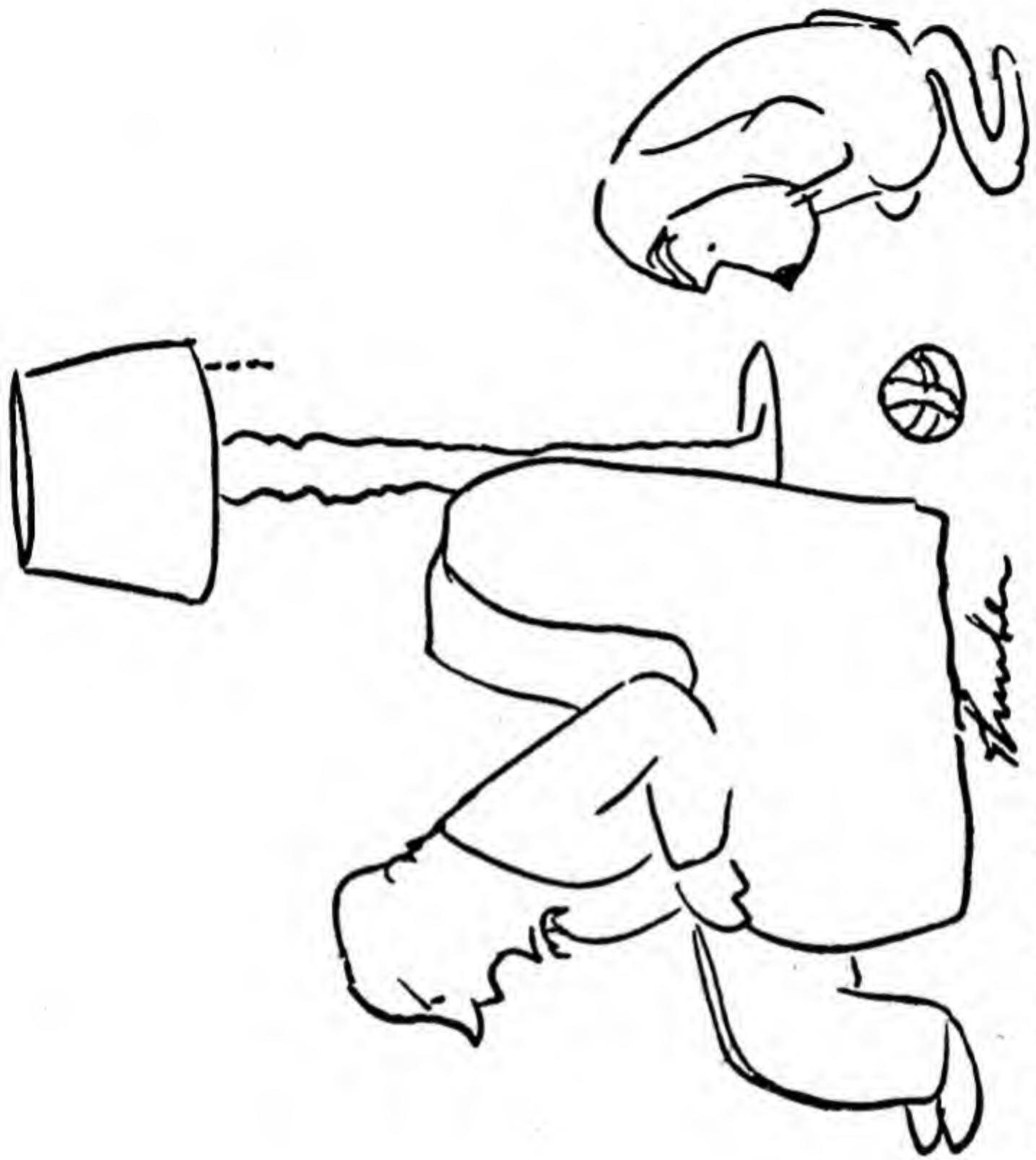


"She built up her personality but she's undermined her character."





"I was voted the biggest heel in school, Mamma!"

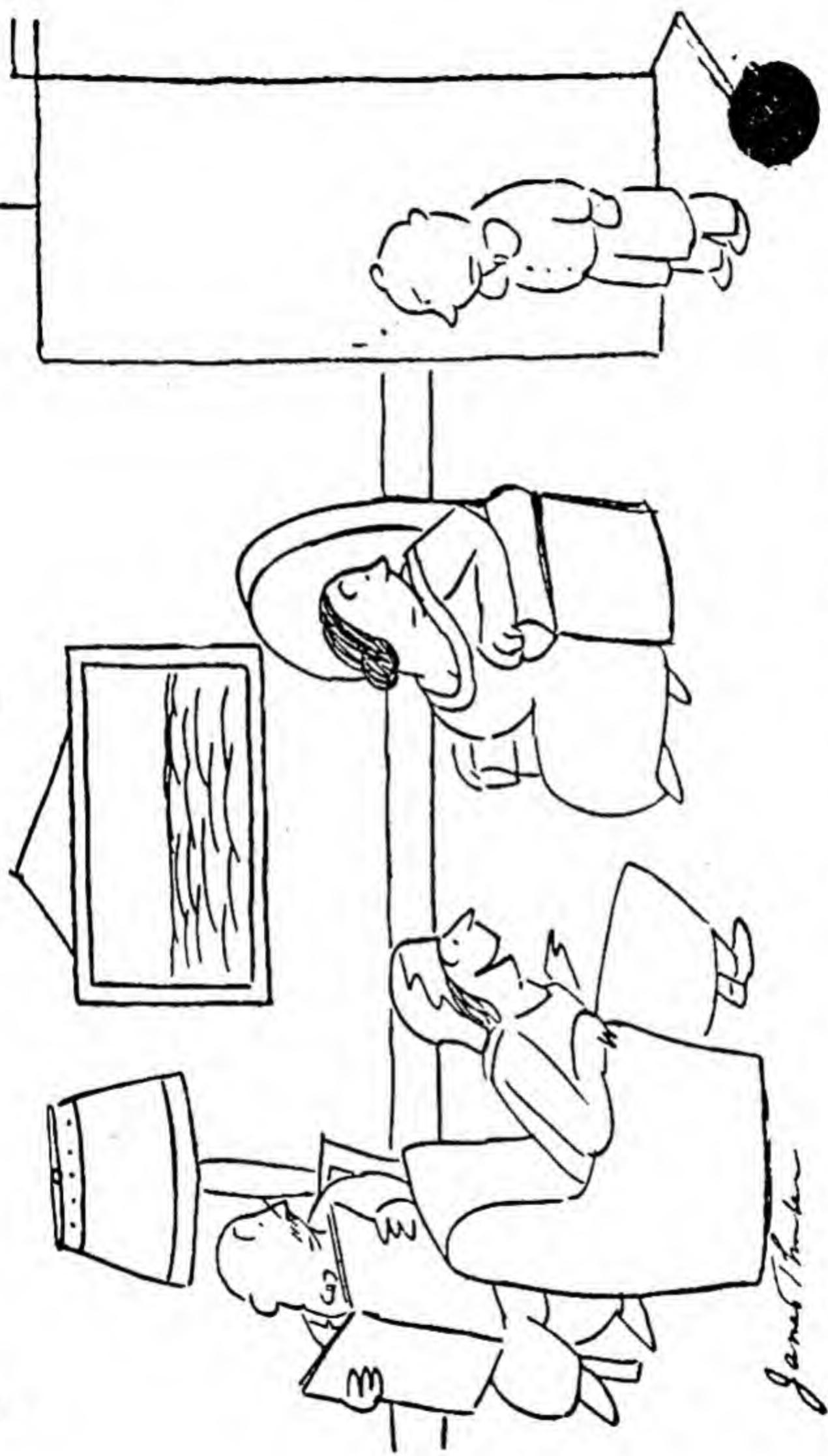


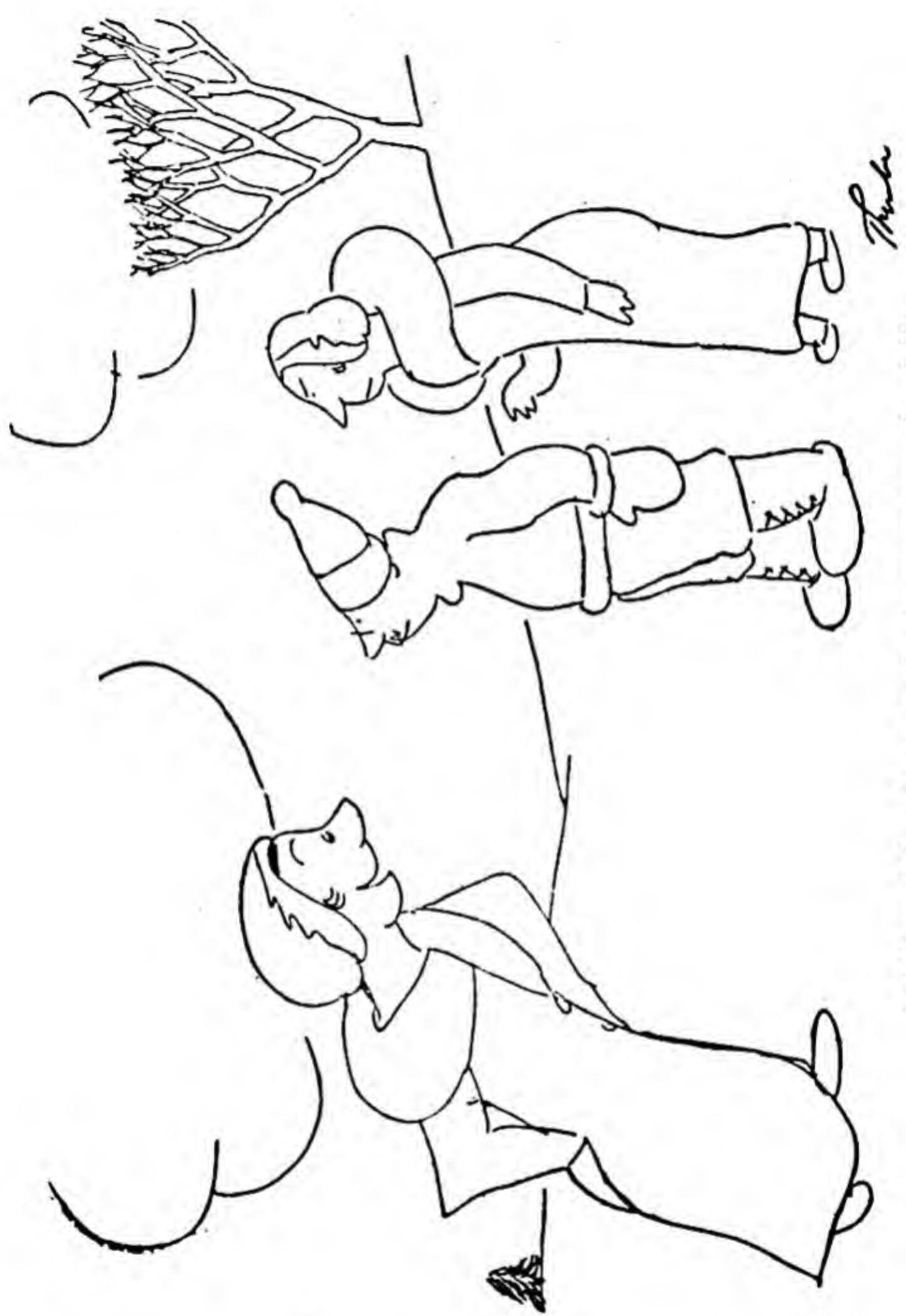
"Why don't you wait and see what becomes of your own
generation before you jump on mine?"



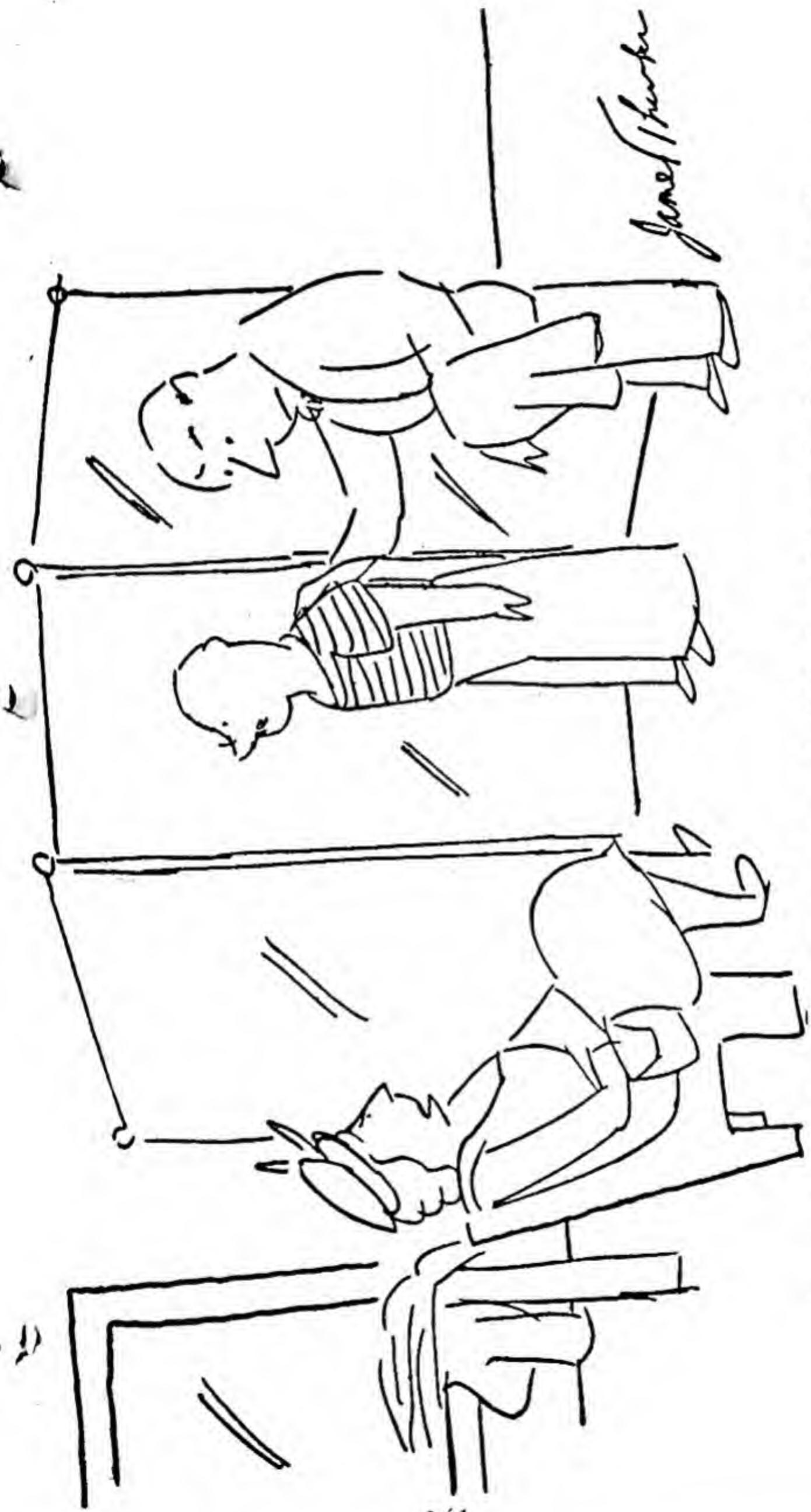
"Why I never dreamed your union had been blessed with issue!"

Jane Thackeray



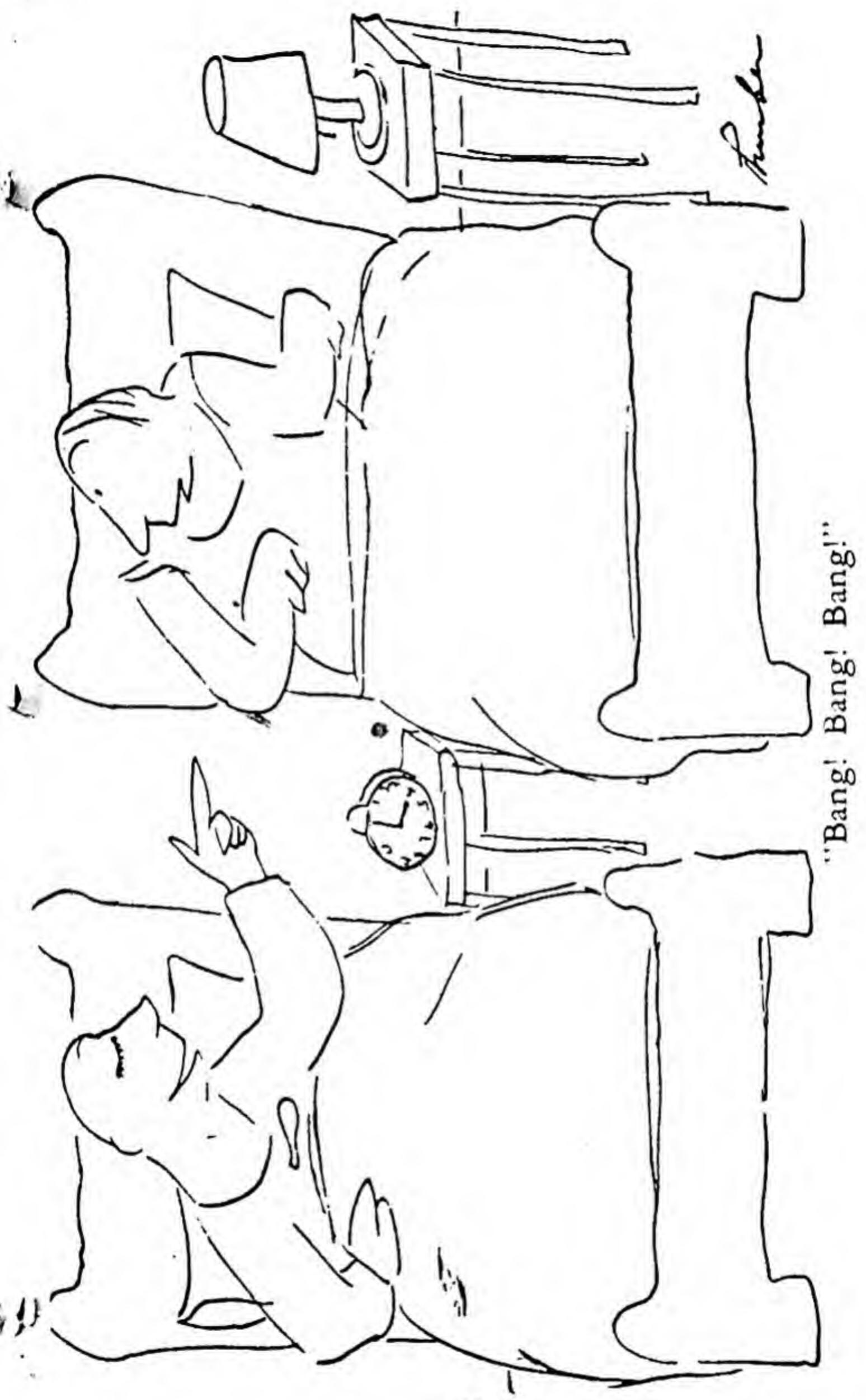


"Why, Mr. Spears, how cute you look!"



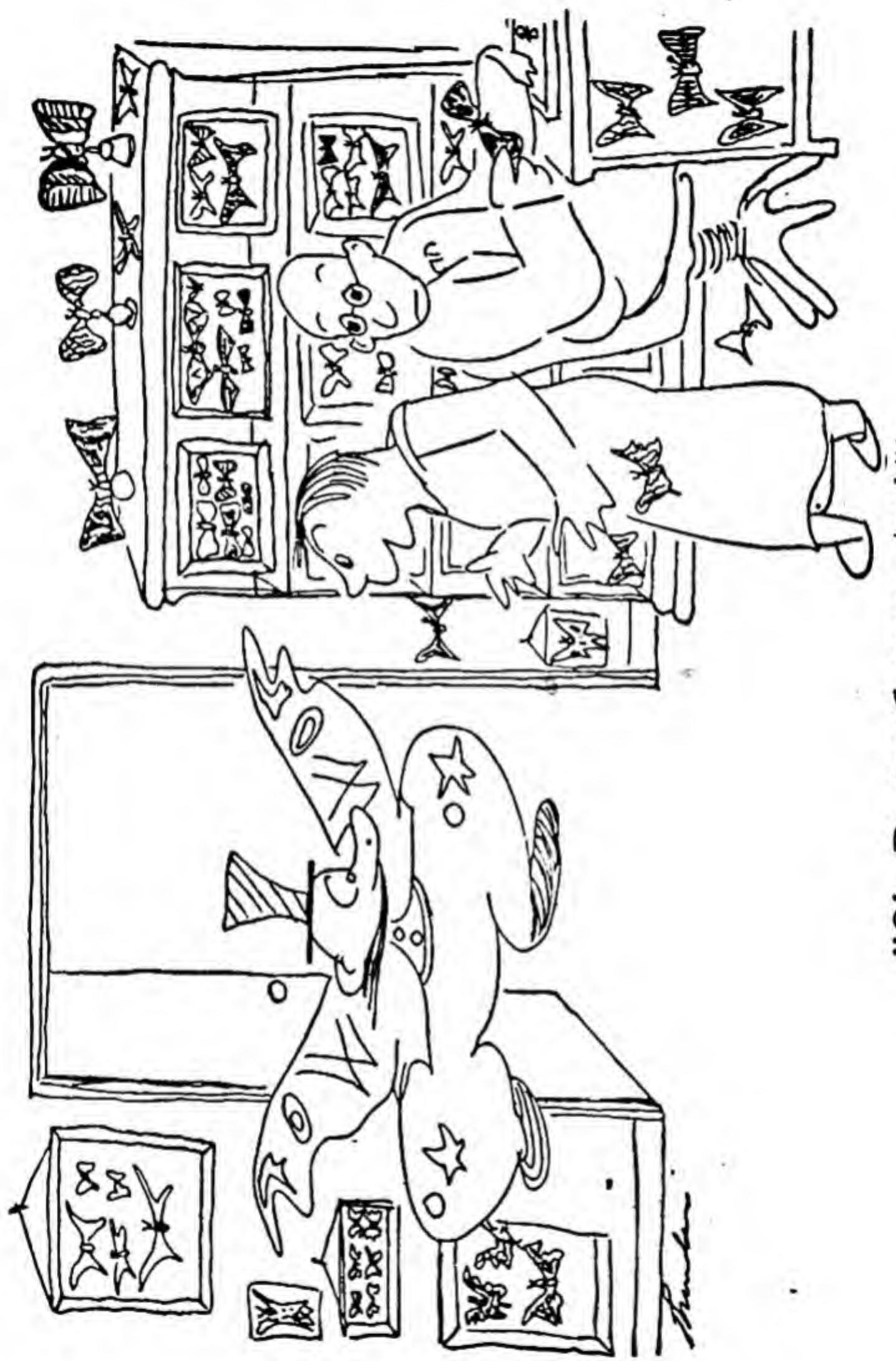
"I don't want him to be comfortable if he's going to look too funny."

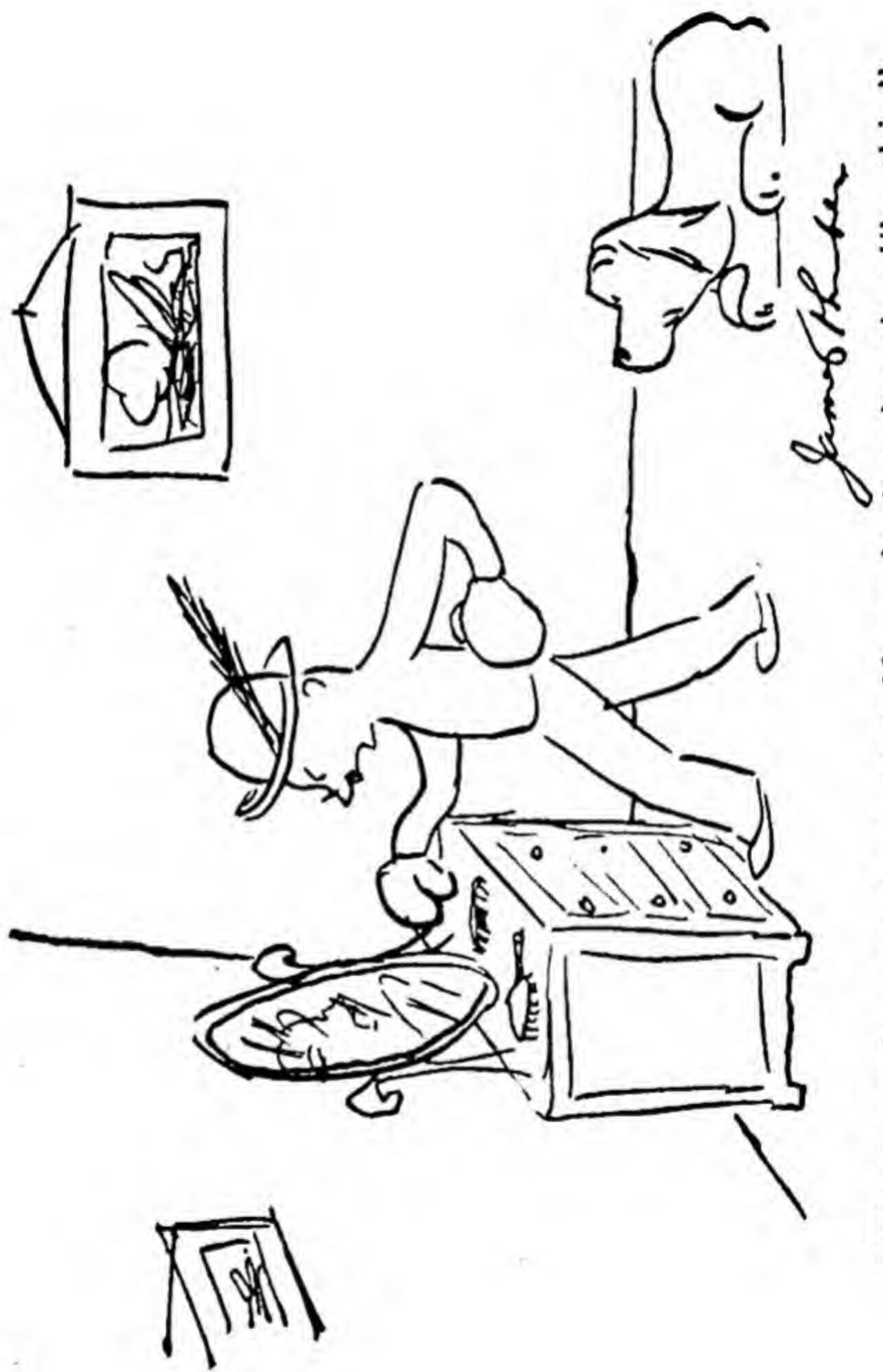




"Bang! Bang! Bang!"

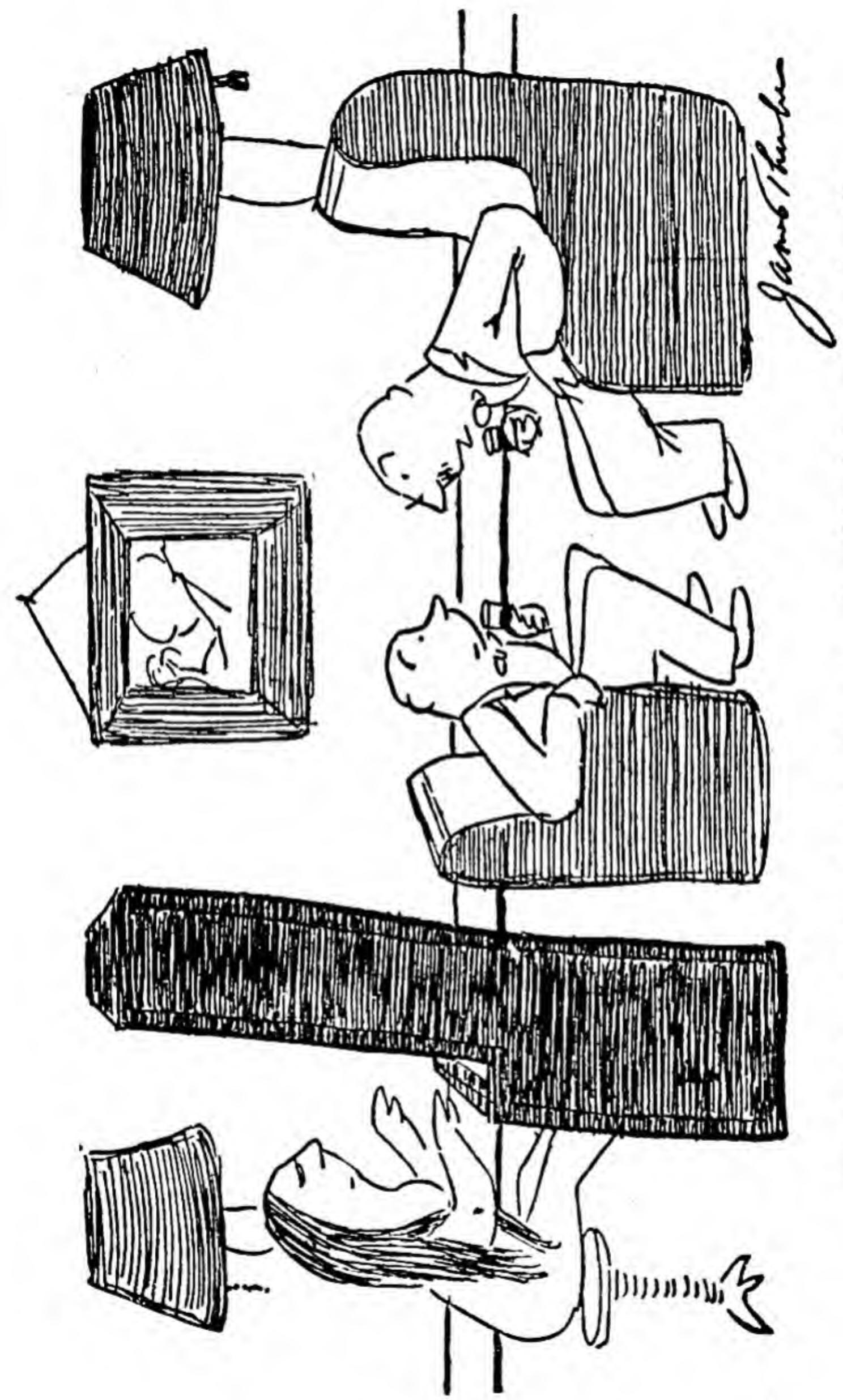
"Oh, Doctor Conroy—look!"

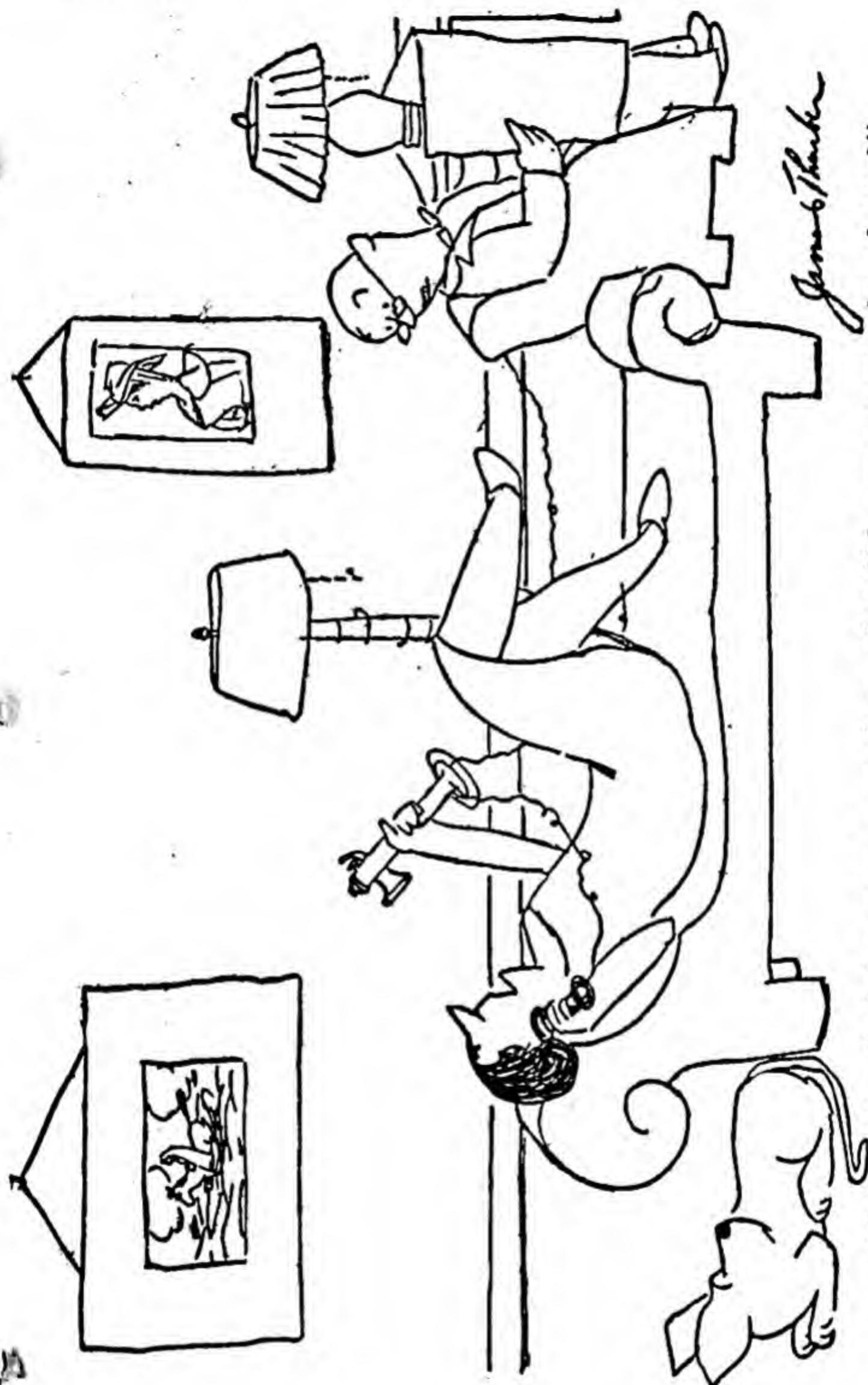




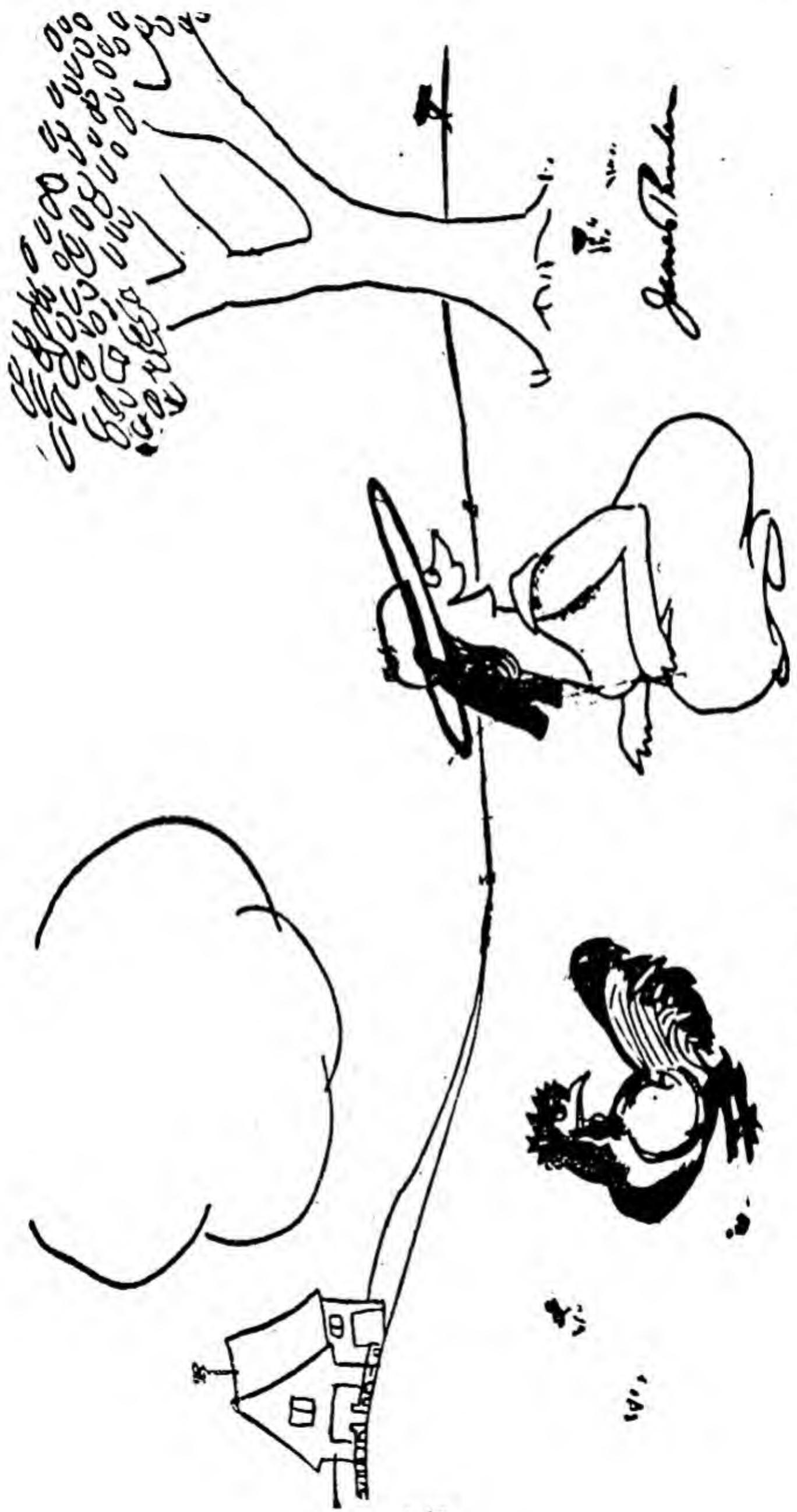
"They're going to put you away if you don't quit acting like this."

"I'd feel a great deal easier if her husband hadn't gone to bed."

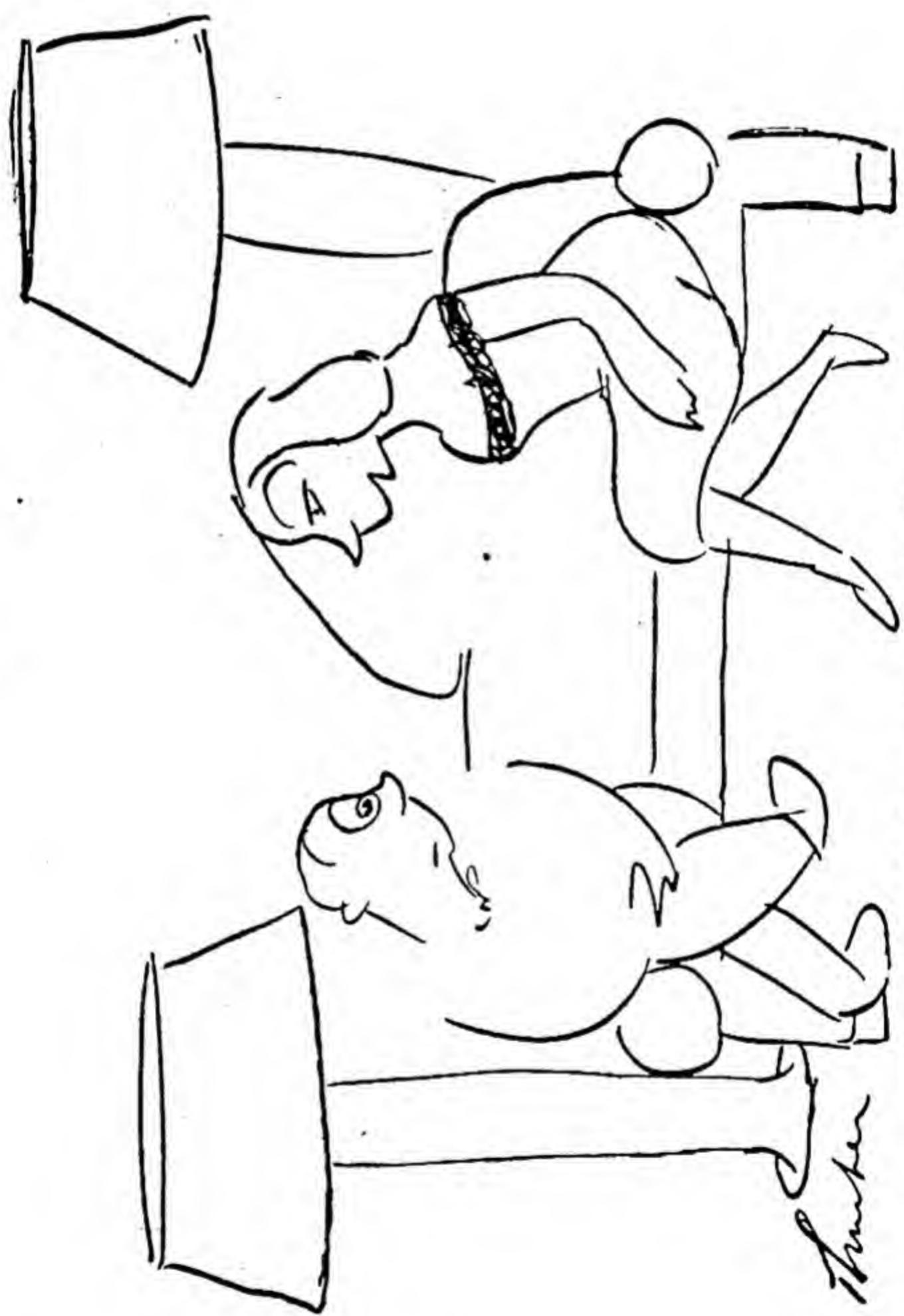




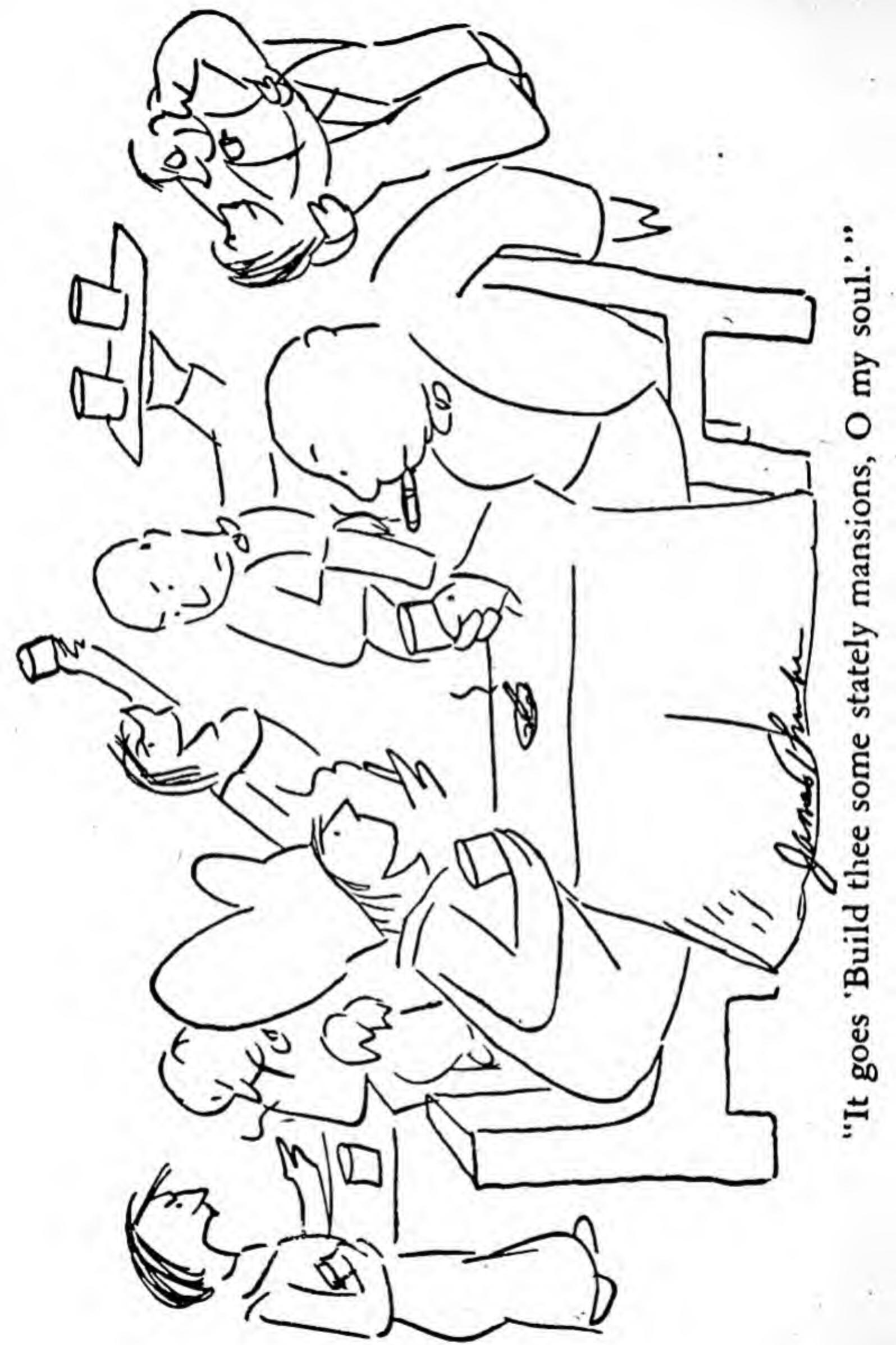
"Well, if I called the wrong number, why did you answer the phone?"



"Yoo-hoo—George! Chanticleer!"



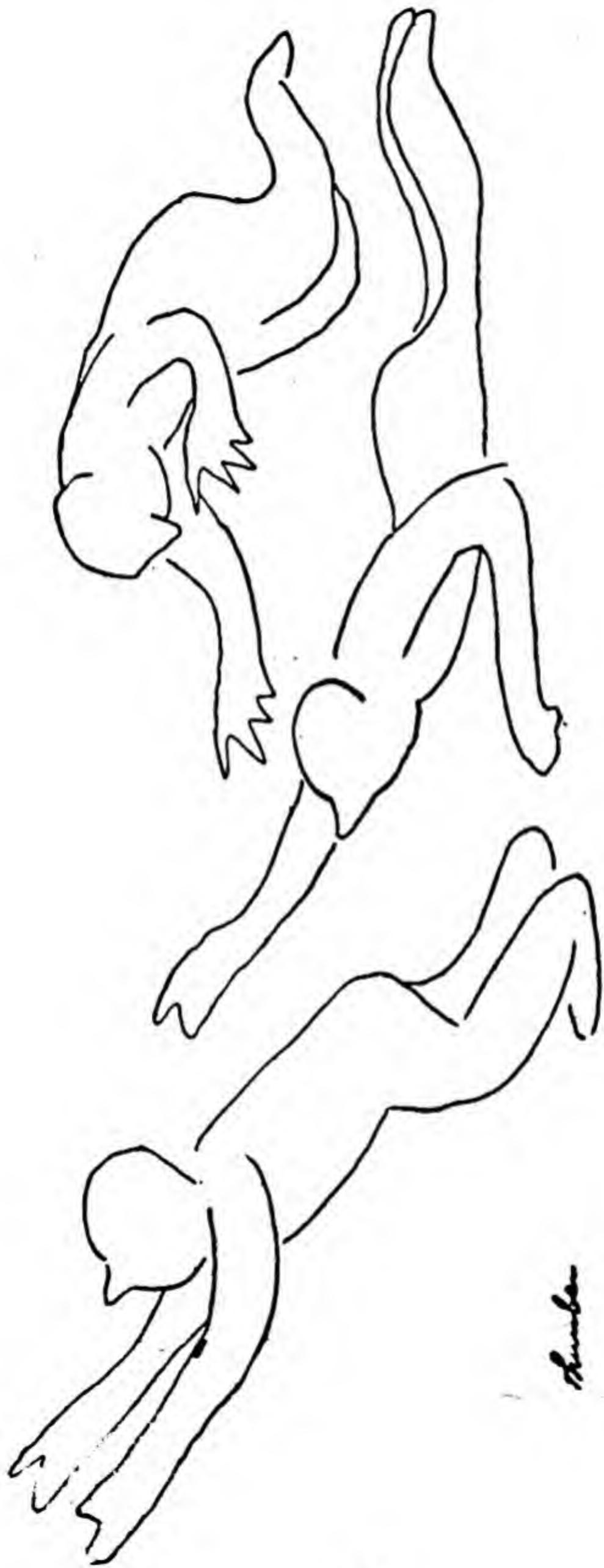
"I suppose all that you men think about is war."



"It goes 'Build thee some stately mansions, O my soul.'"

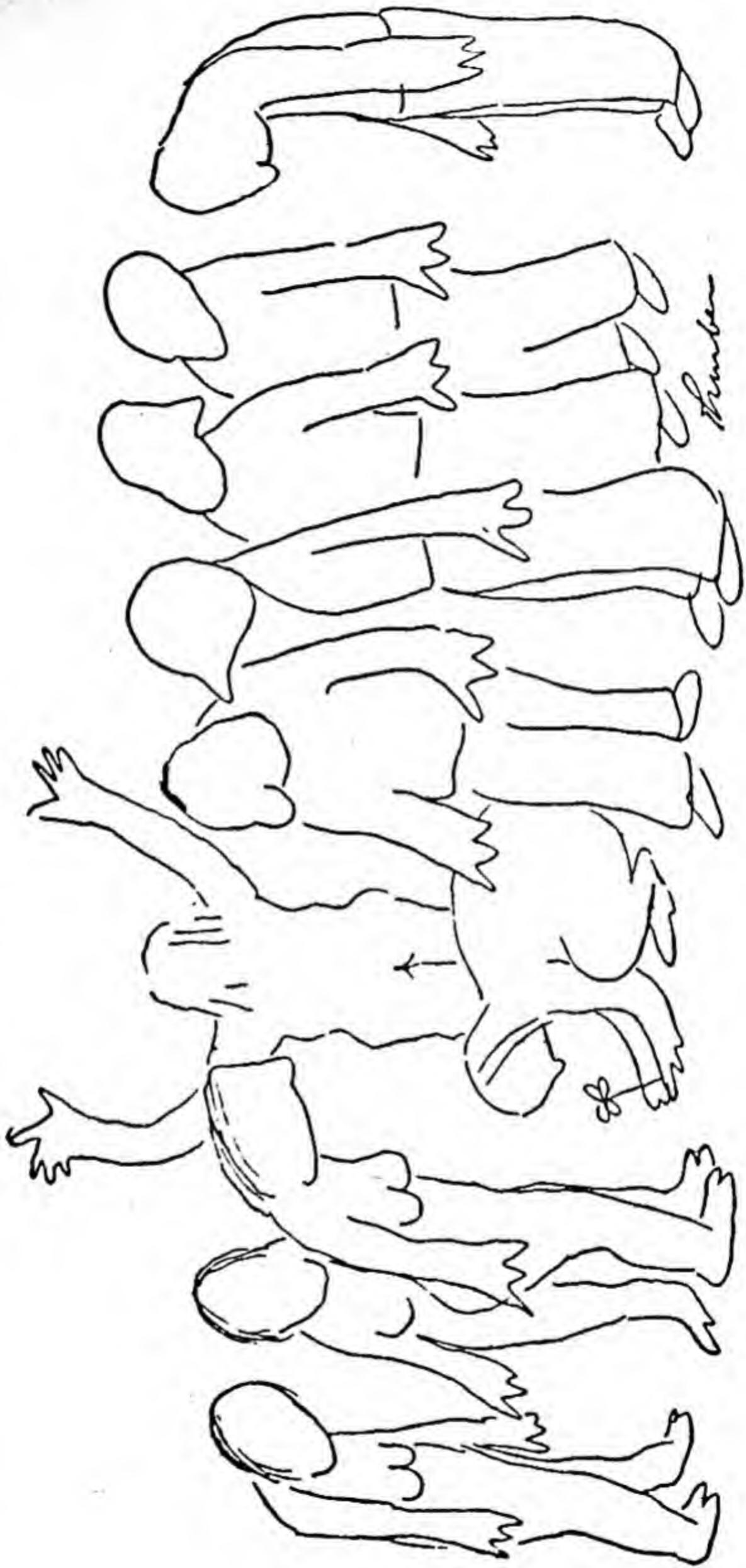


Rain in the desert



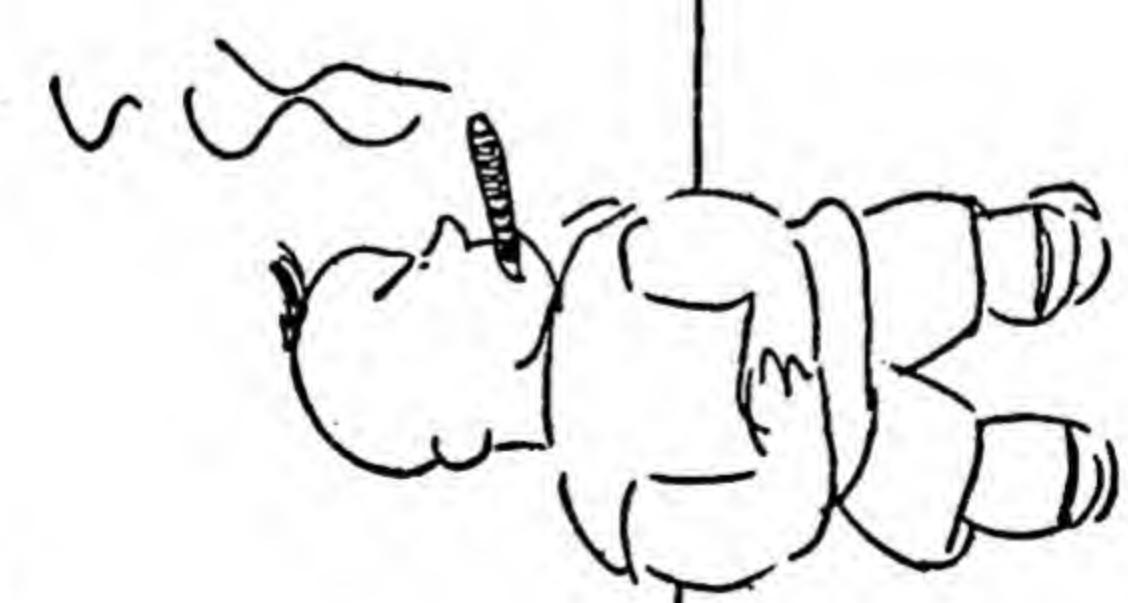
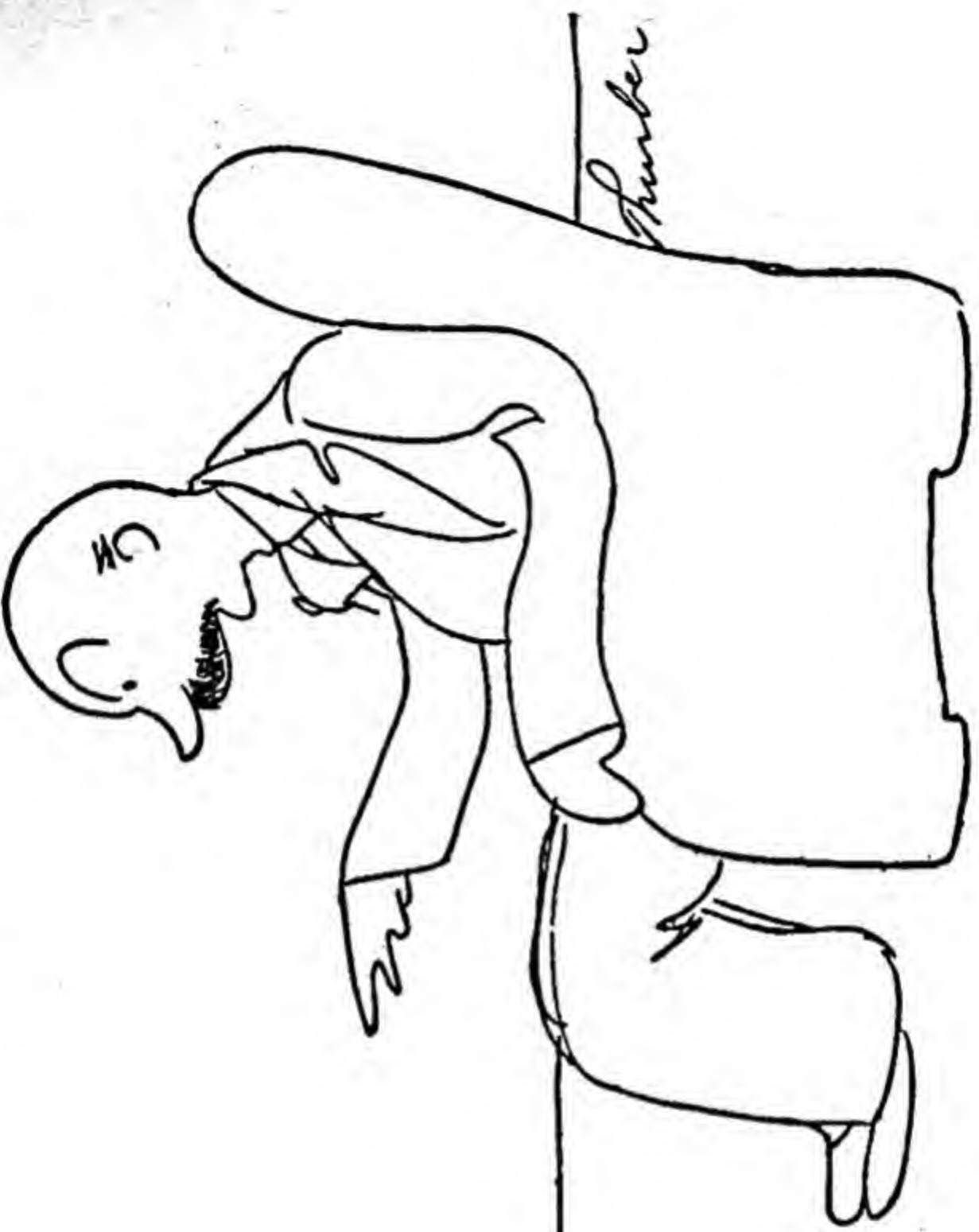
autumn

The Last Flower

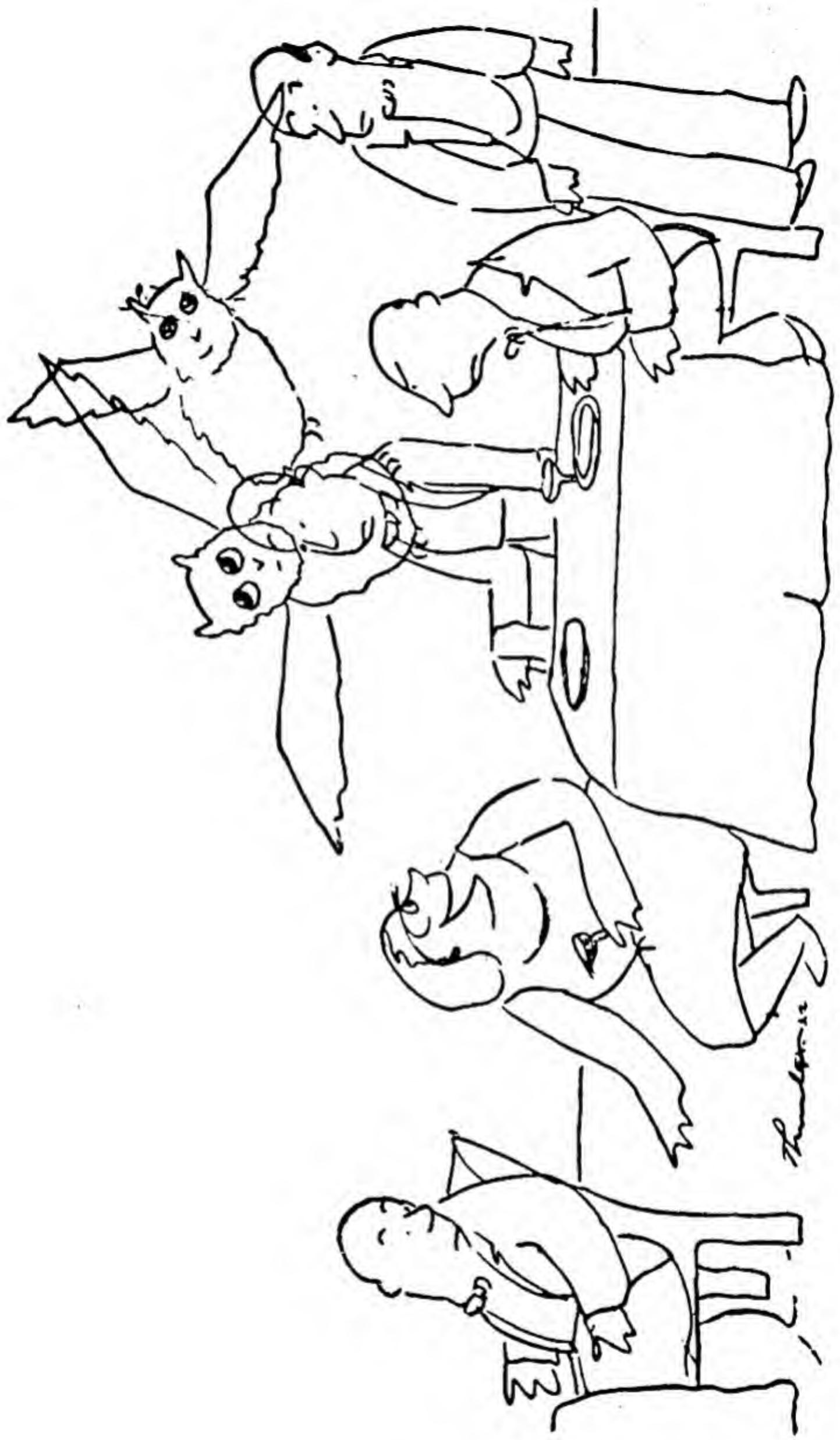


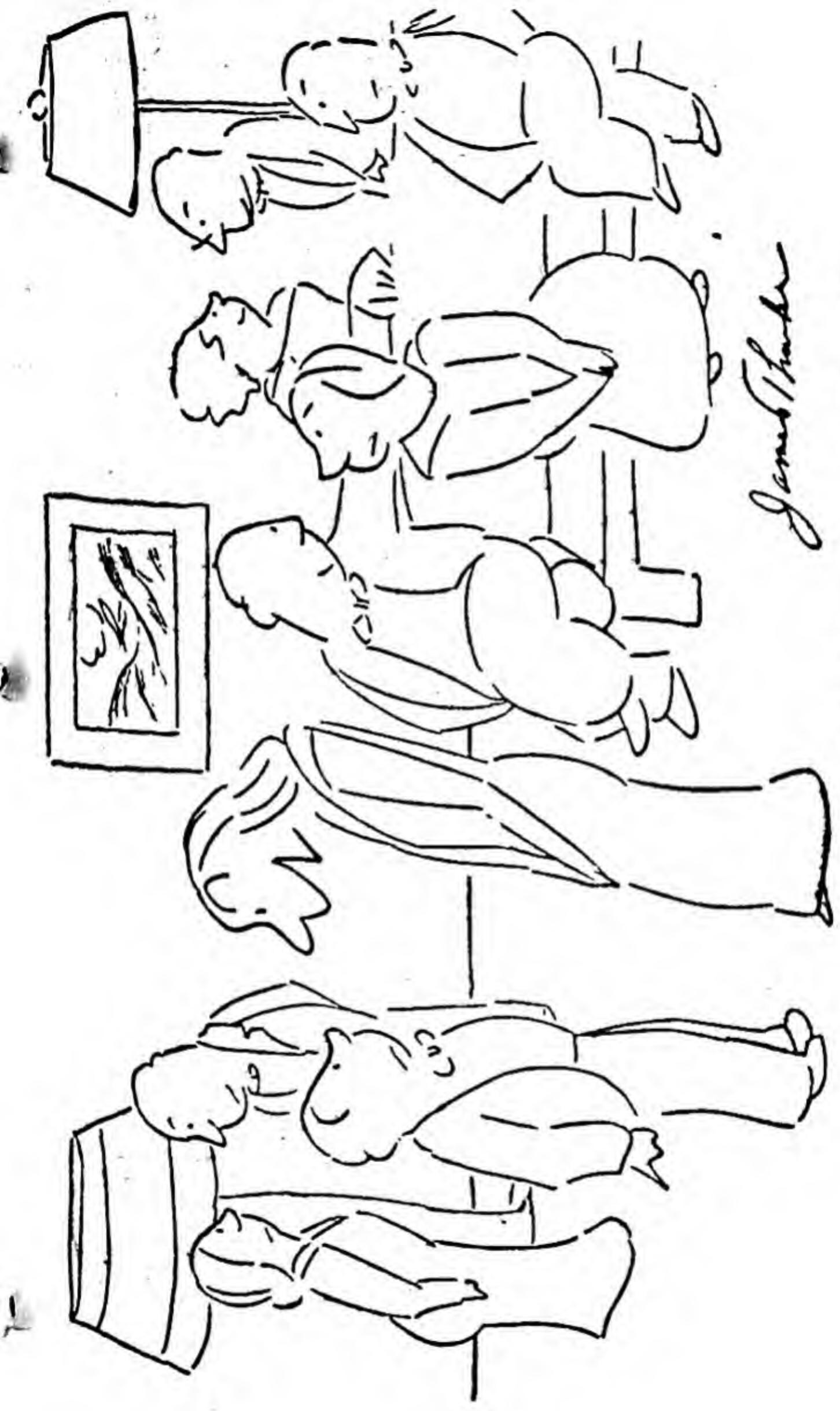


"Mother, this is Tristram."



"Father would be much happier if you wouldn't."

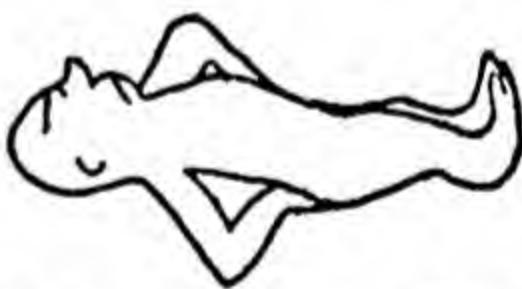
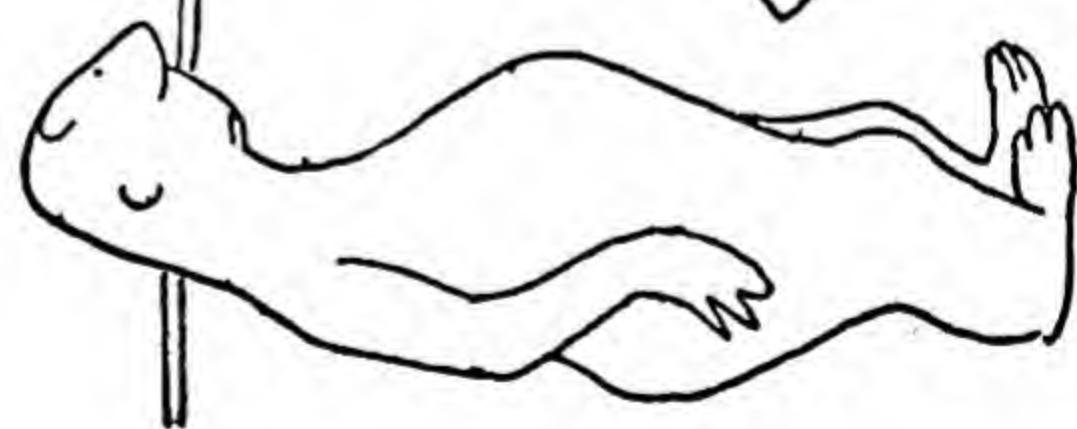




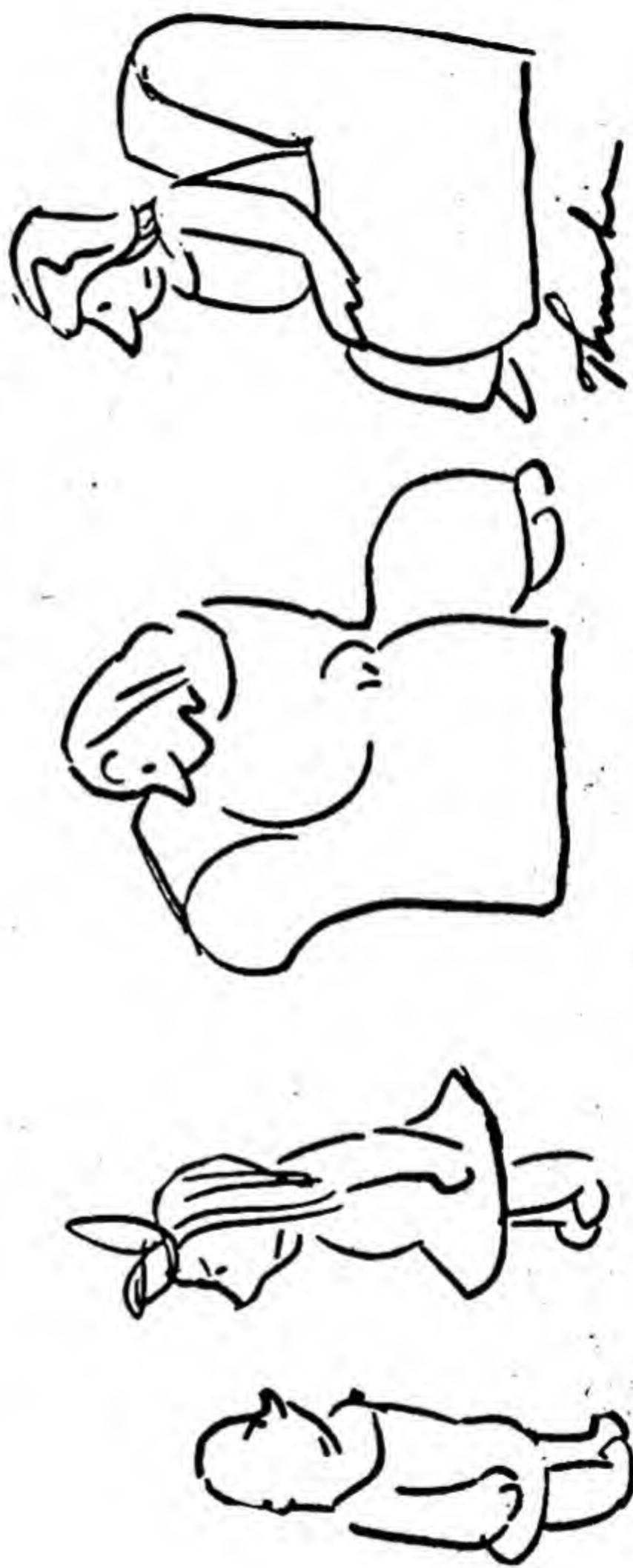
"I love the idea of there being two sexes, don't you?"

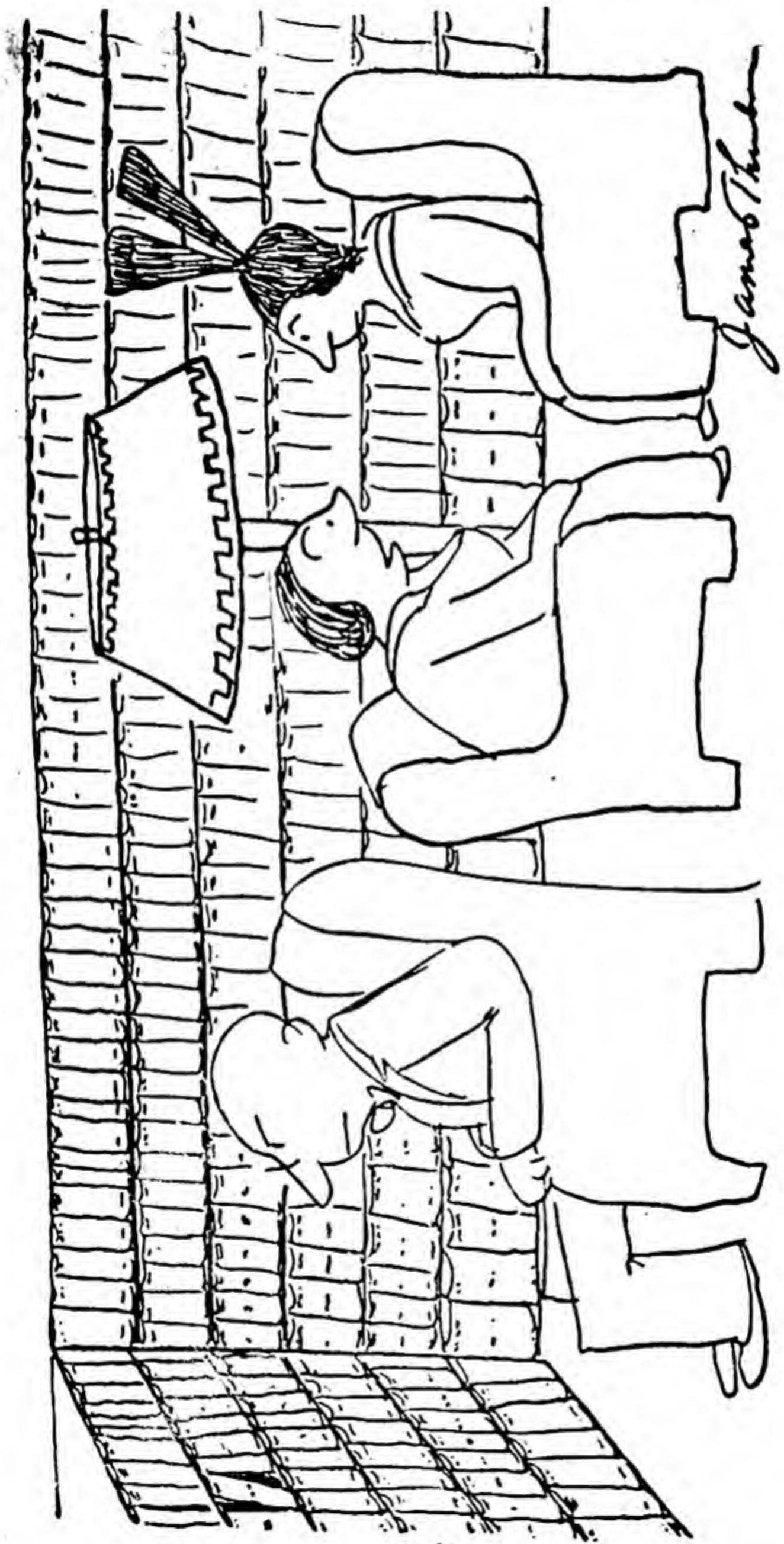


PSYCHE NUDEST CLUB



"Alice can be a little girl Commando in your game, Donald."



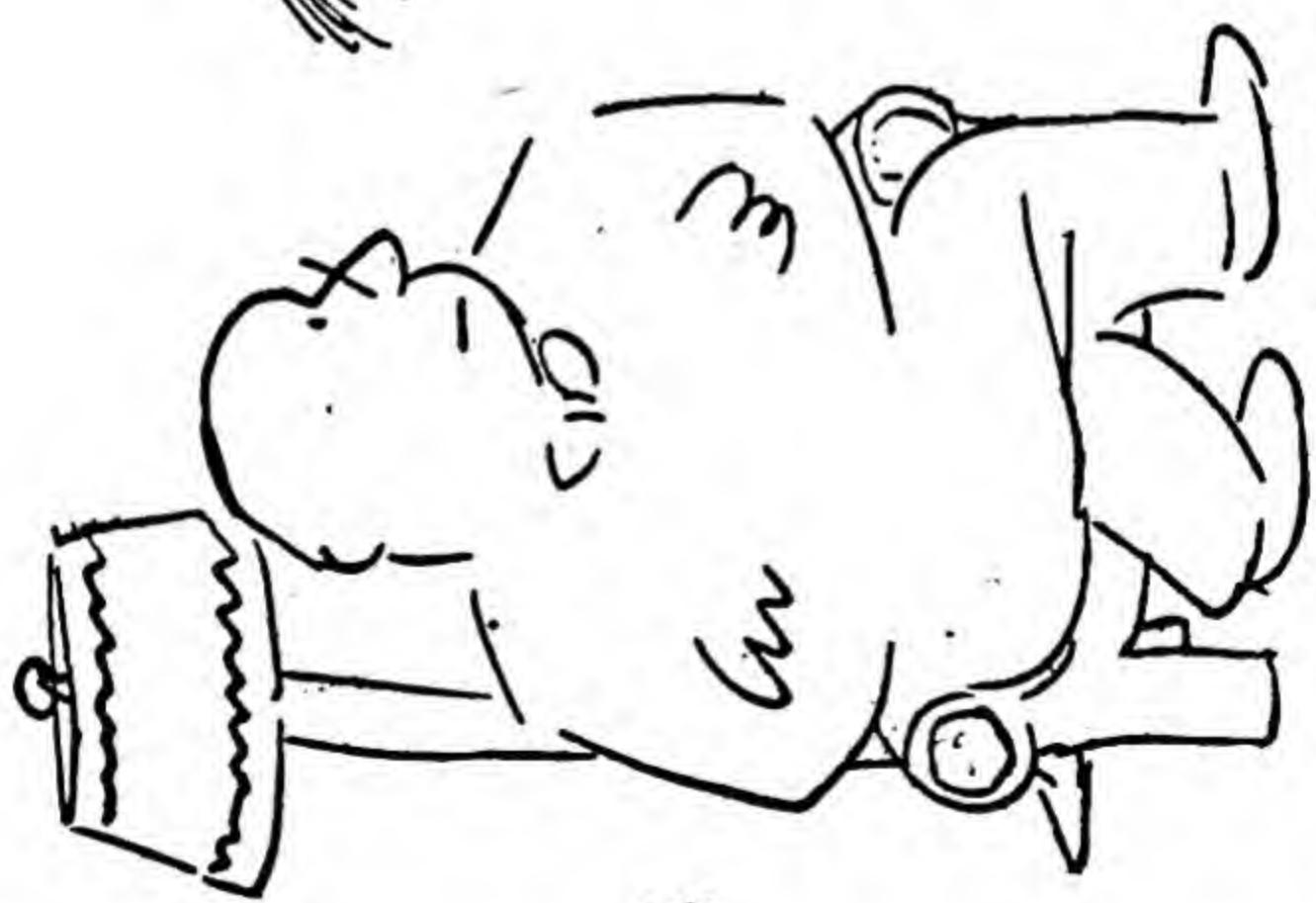


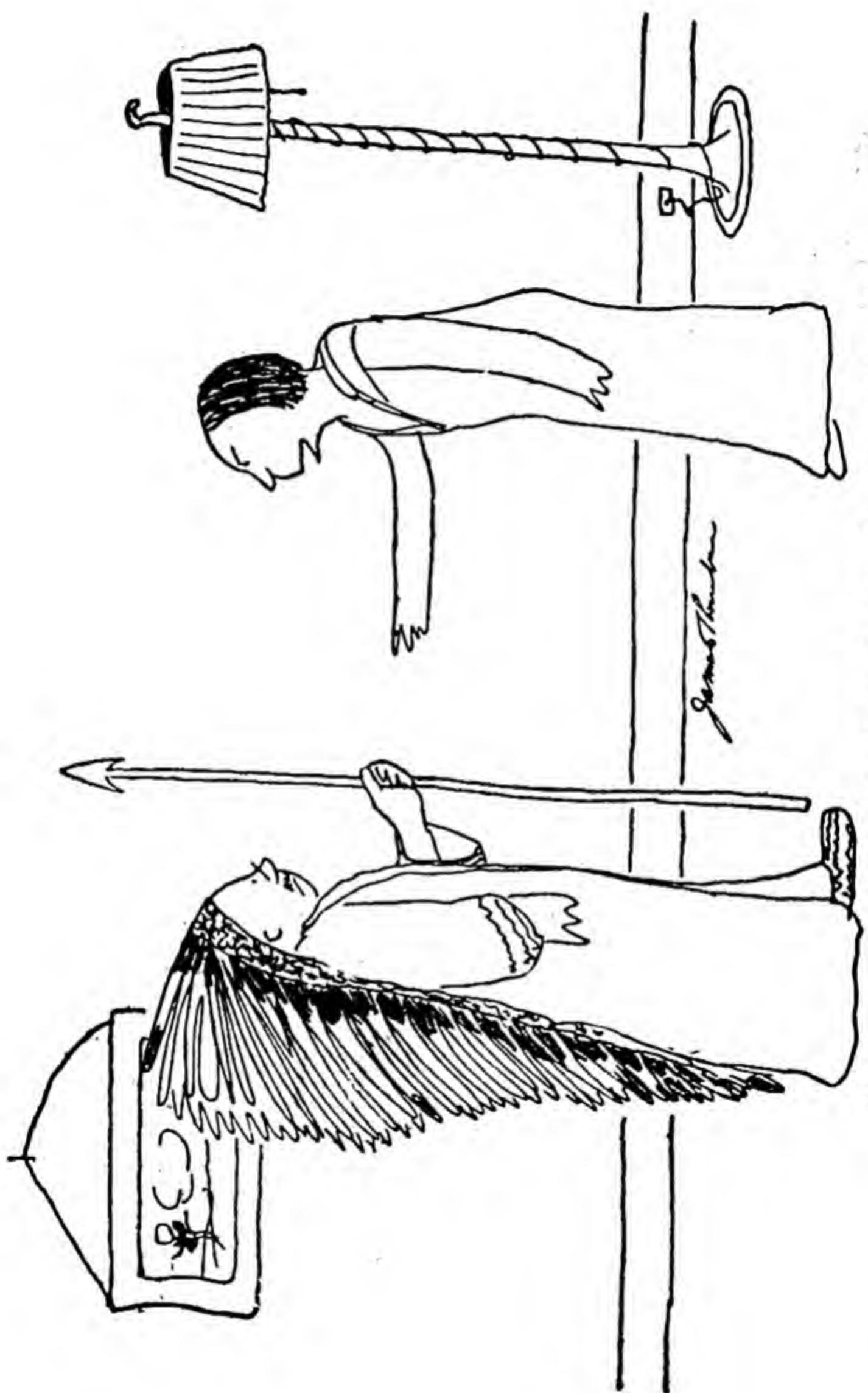
"He doesn't believe a single word he's read in the past ten years."



Ground floor

"Why did I ever marry below my emotional level!"

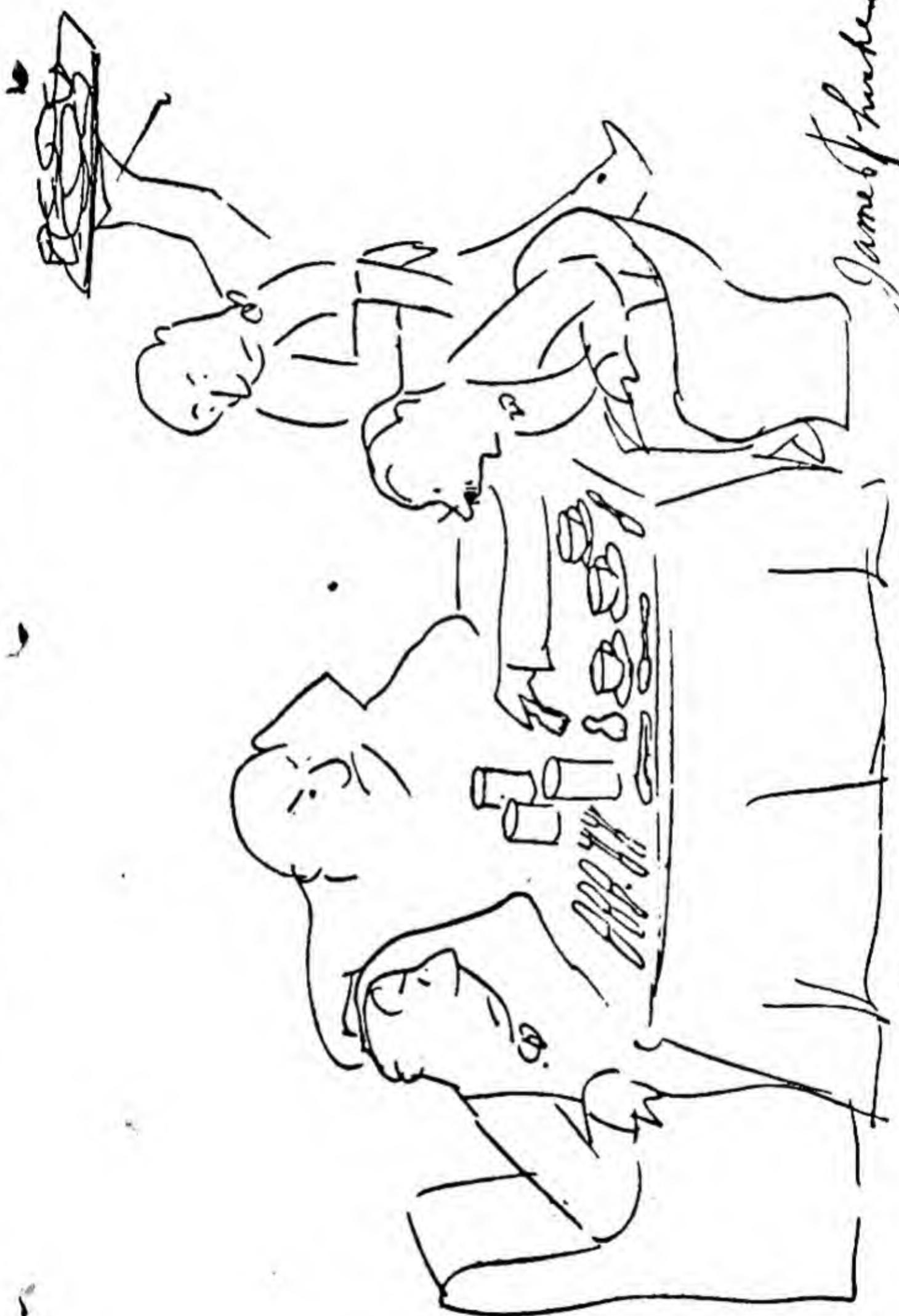




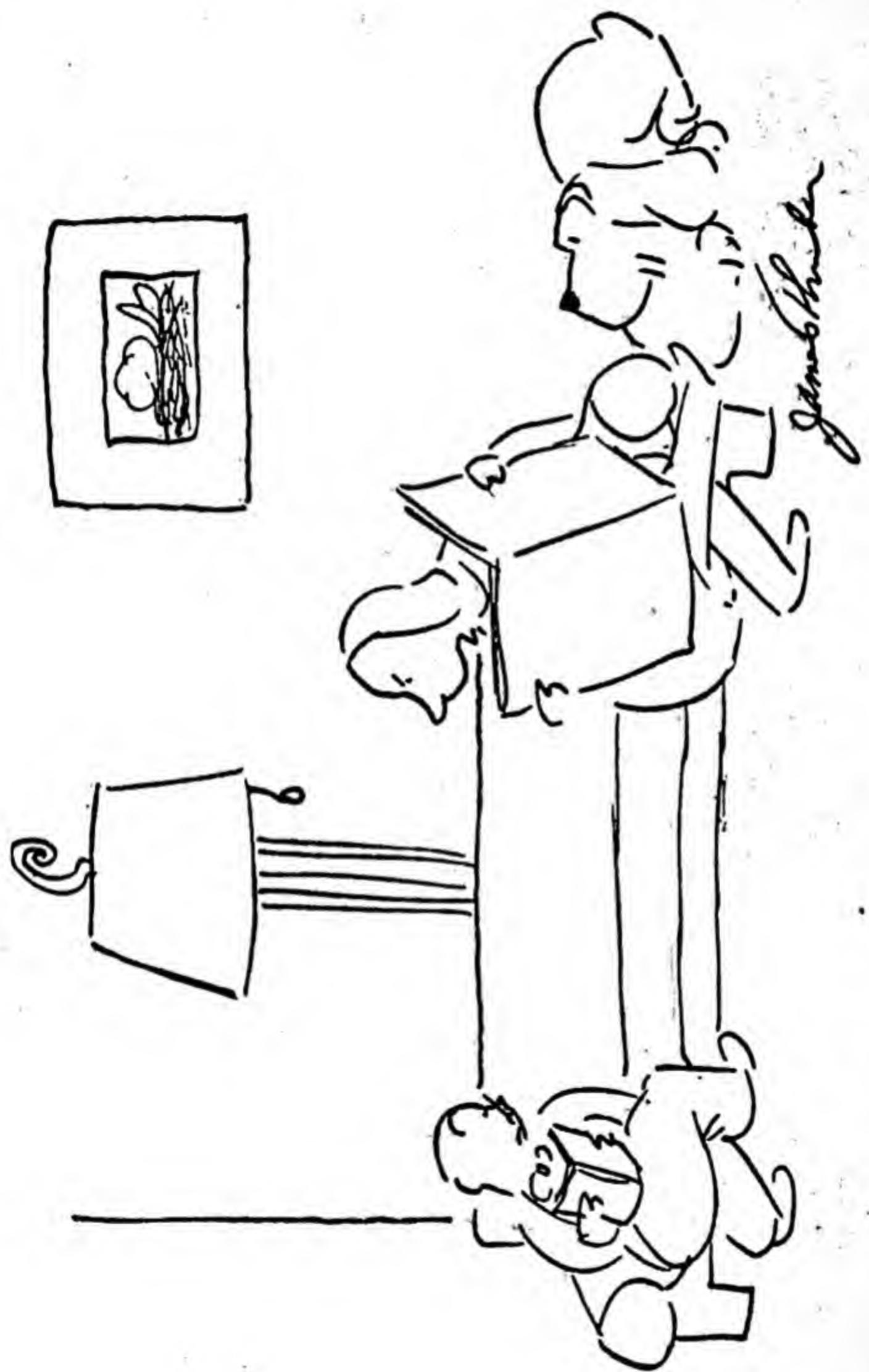
"You haven't got the face for it, for *one* thing."

"Now if I were Oveta Culp Hobby :

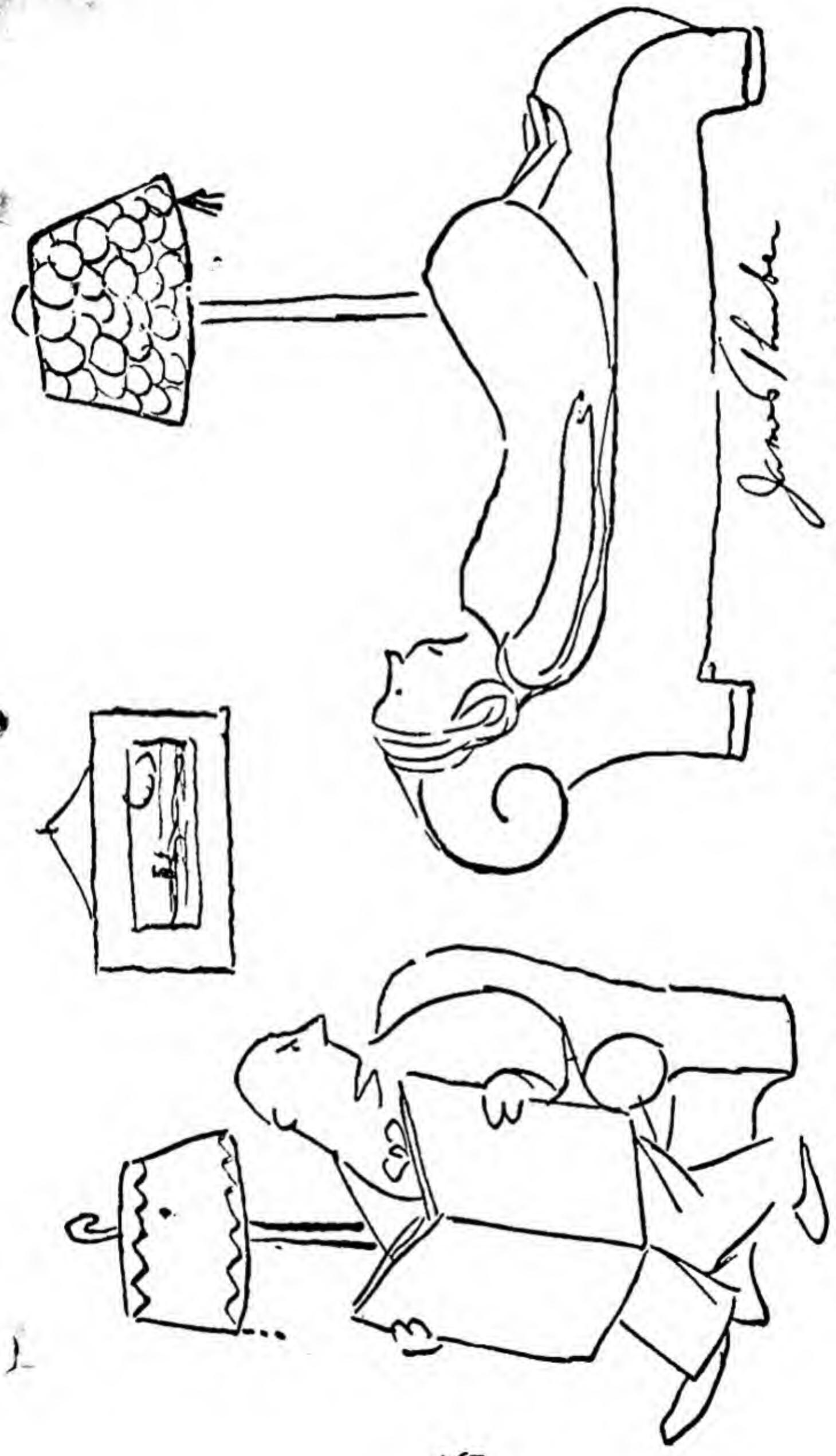
James Thacker

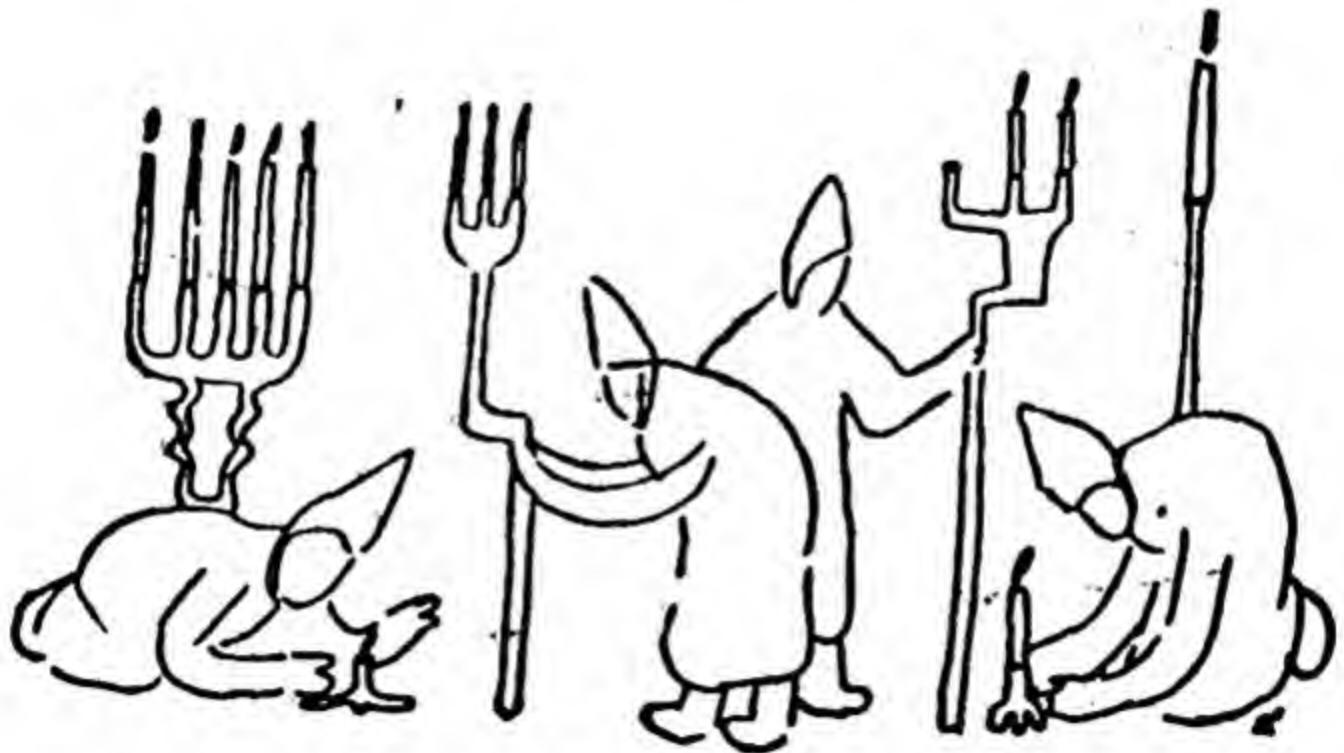


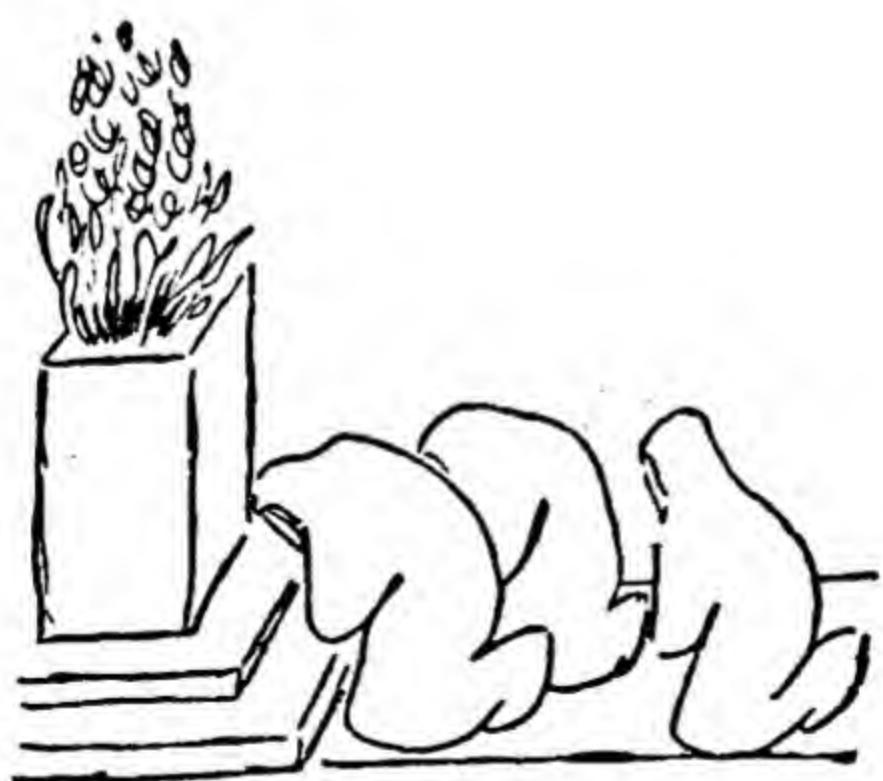
"Who is this Hitler and what does he want?"



"I do love you. I just don't feel like talking military tactics with you."









James Thurber

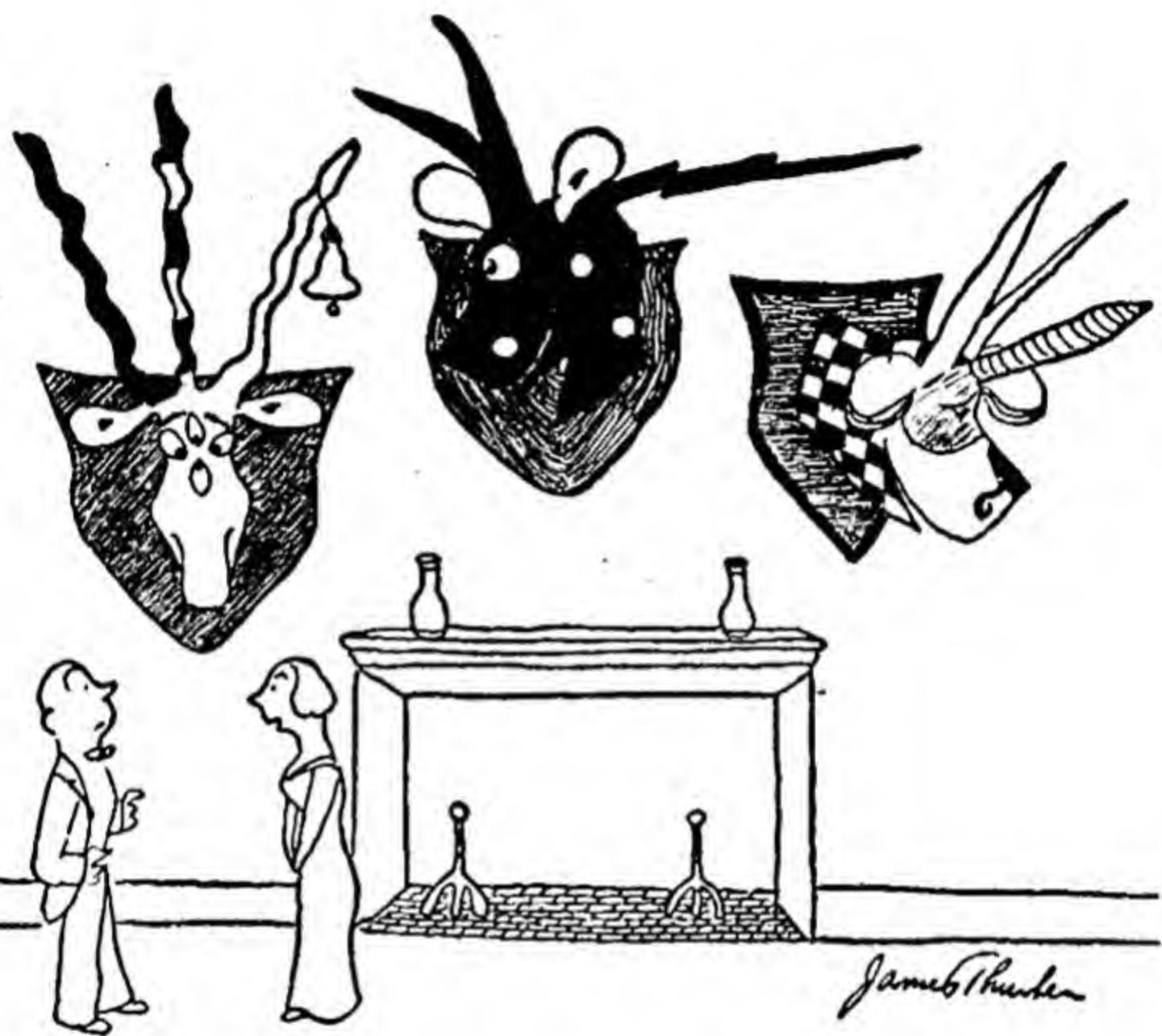
"Why don't you let *me* know what it is, if it's so pleasant?"



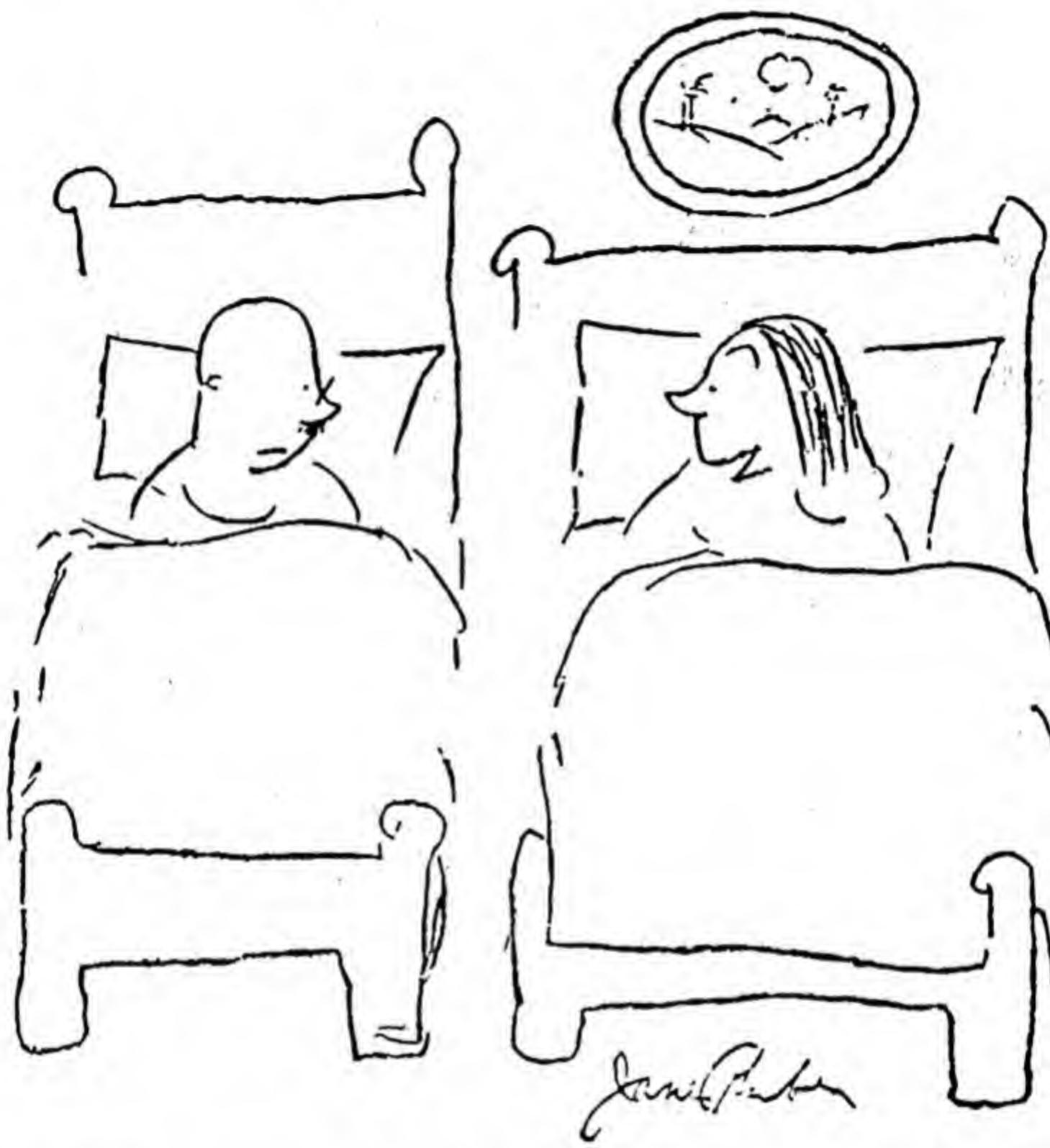
"I'm wearing gloves because I don't want to leave any finger-prints around."



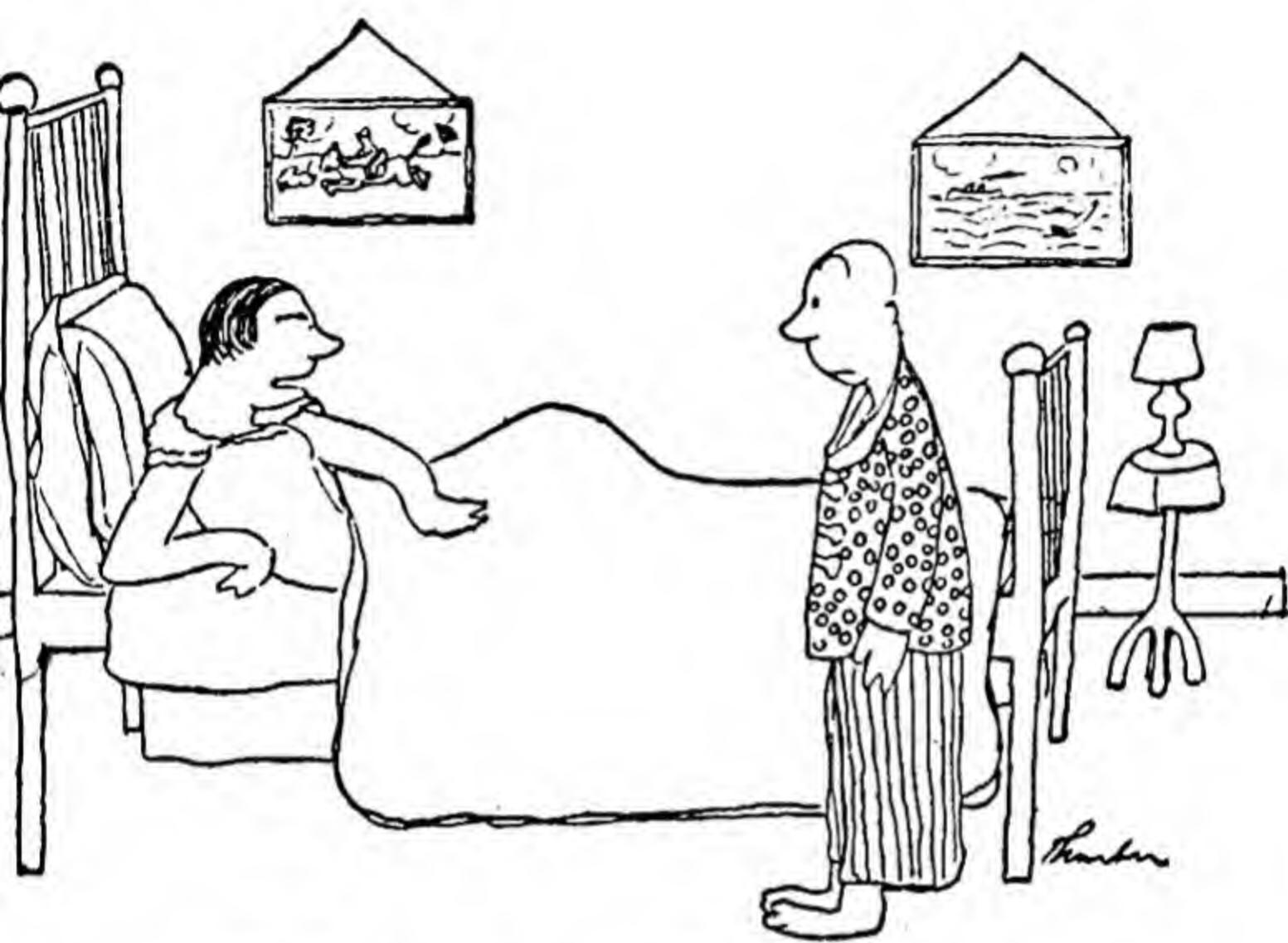
"Of course he's terribly nervous, but I'm sure he meant it
a pass at me."



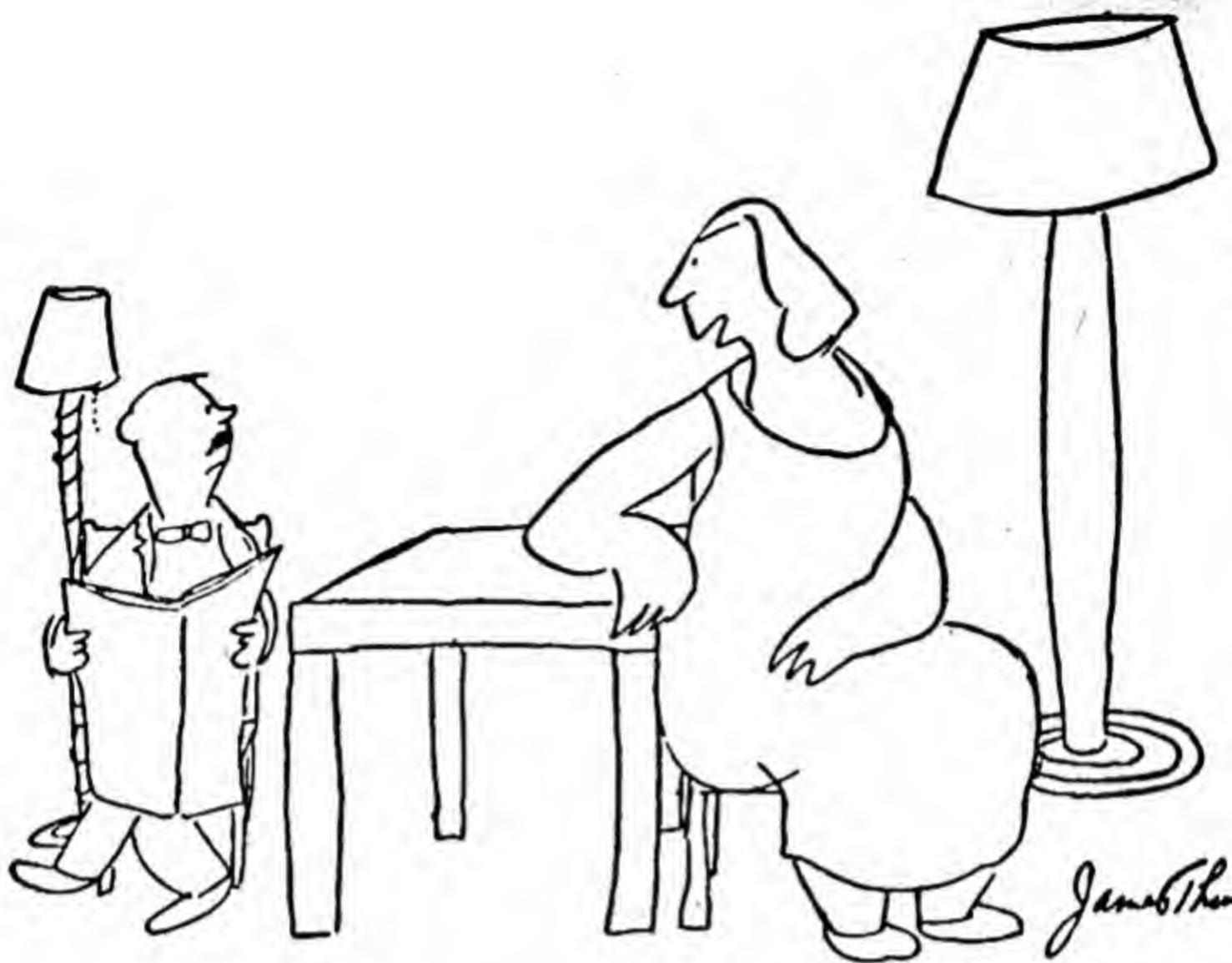
"They were shot by George's uncle—the one that lost his mind."



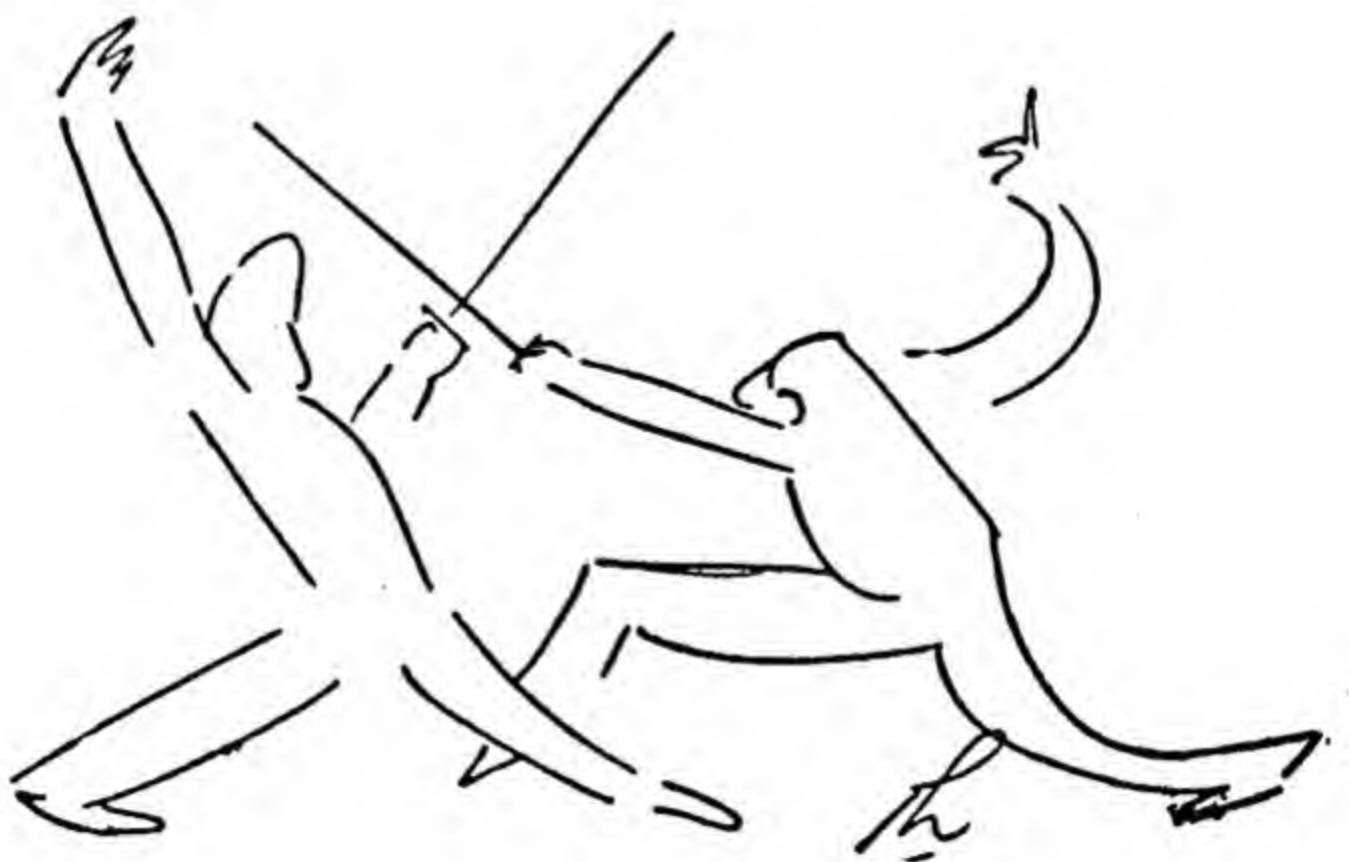
"You were wonderful at the Gardners' last night, Fred,
when you turned on the charm."



"Well, it makes a difference to *me!*"

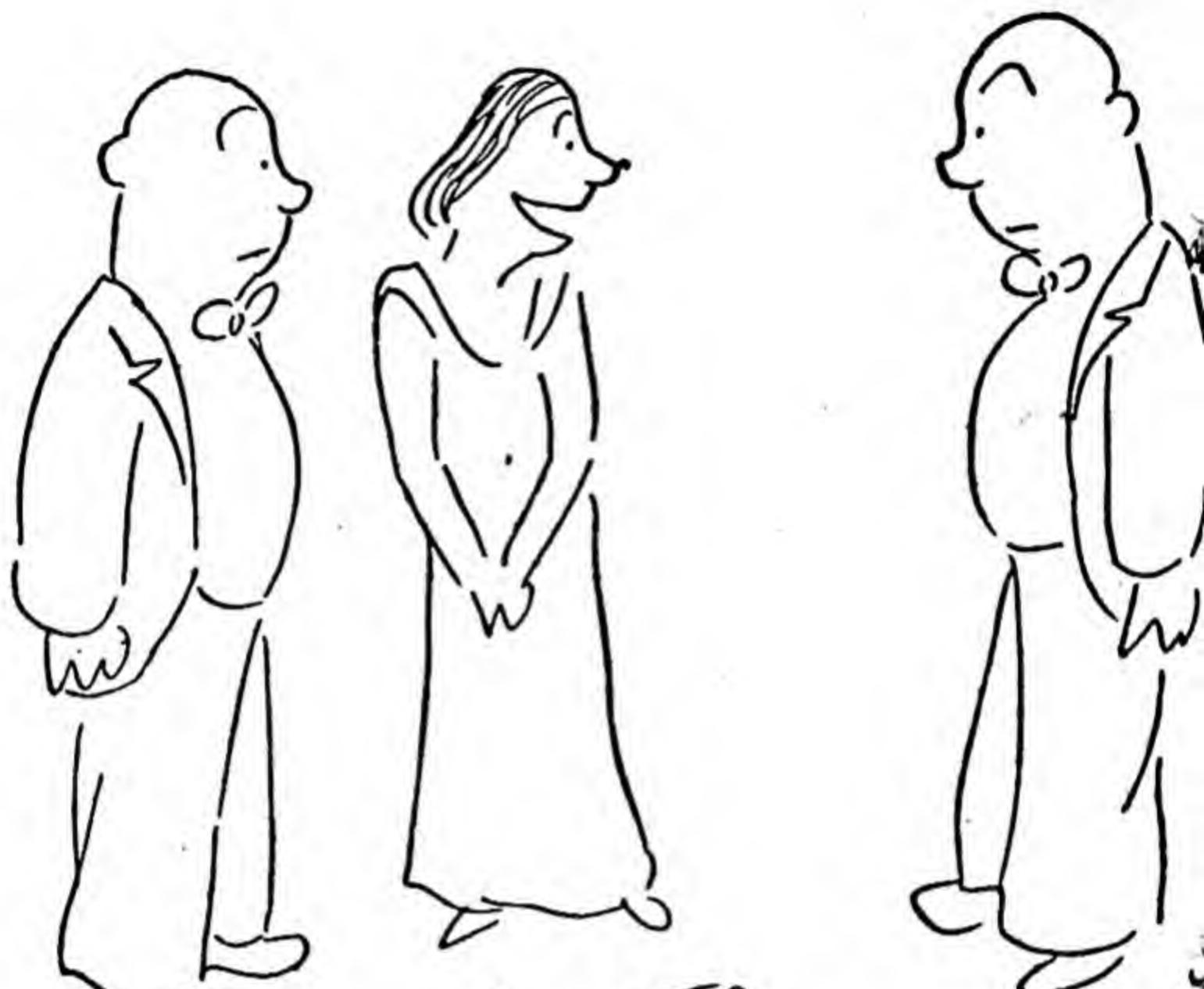


"My analyst is crazy to meet you, darling."



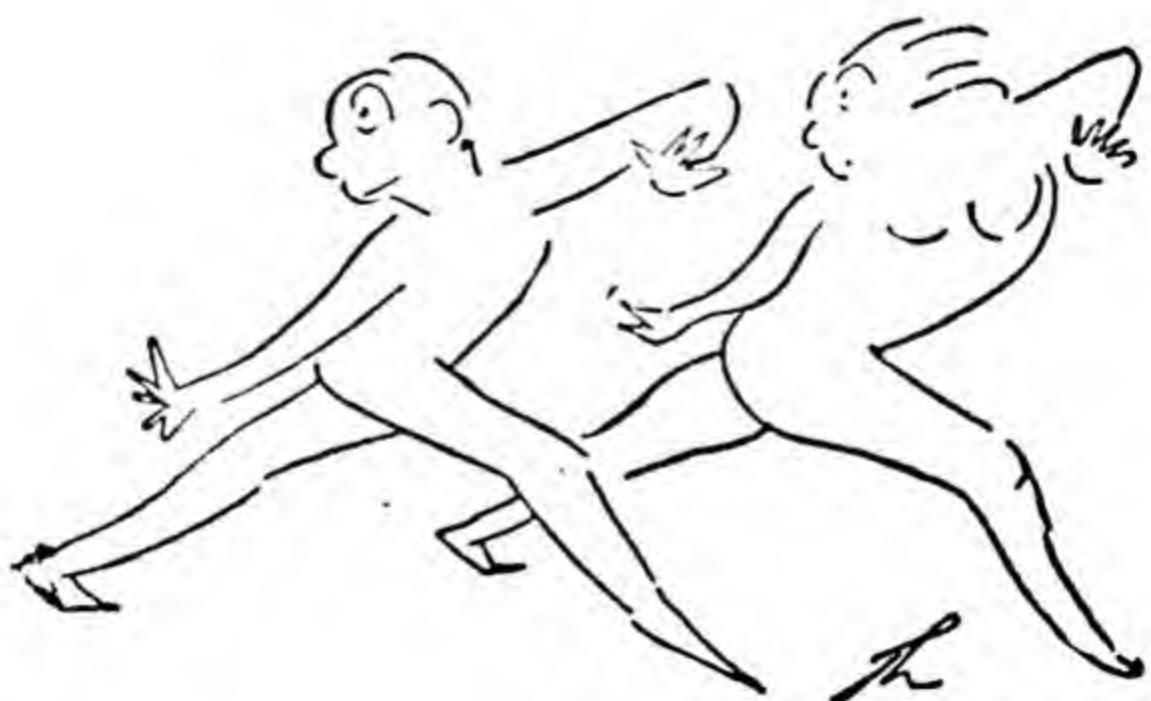


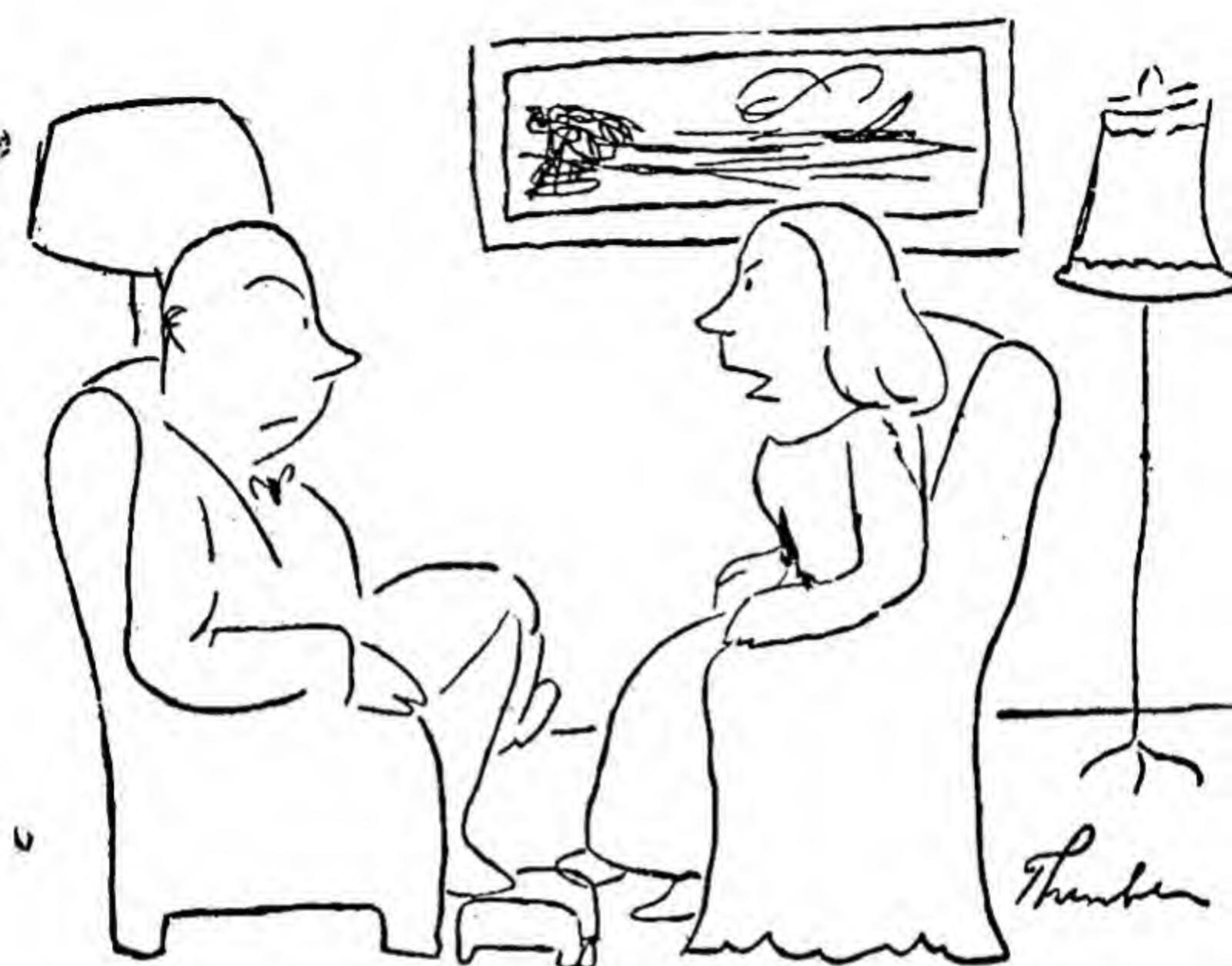
"Perhaps *this* will refresh your memory."



James Thurber

"Well, the bridge game is off. Ely Culbertson is coming and he wants us all to help plan the post-war world."





"Which you am I talking to now?"





"I'm afraid you are in the wrong apartment, Madam."

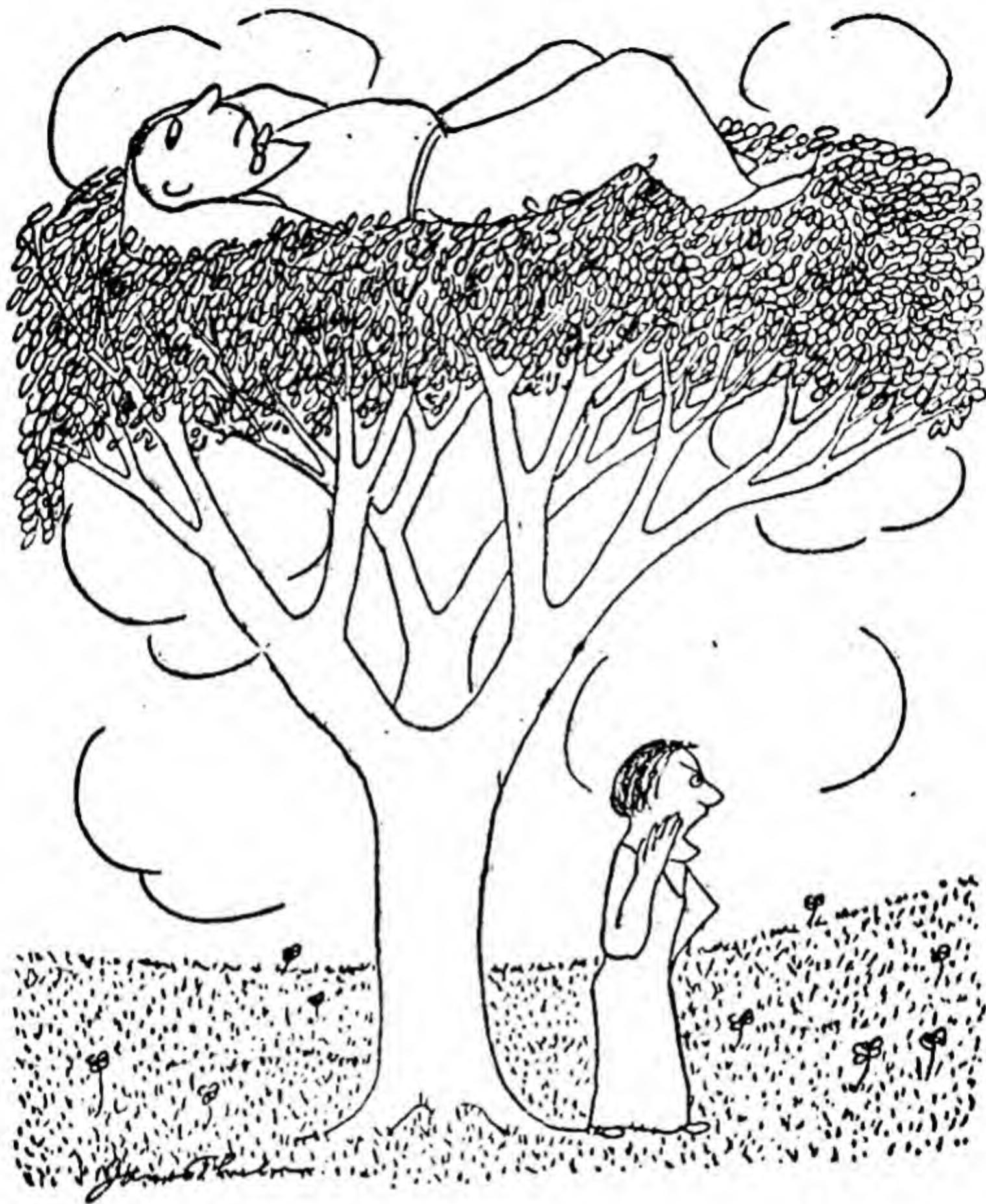


"Miss Gorce is in the embalming game."

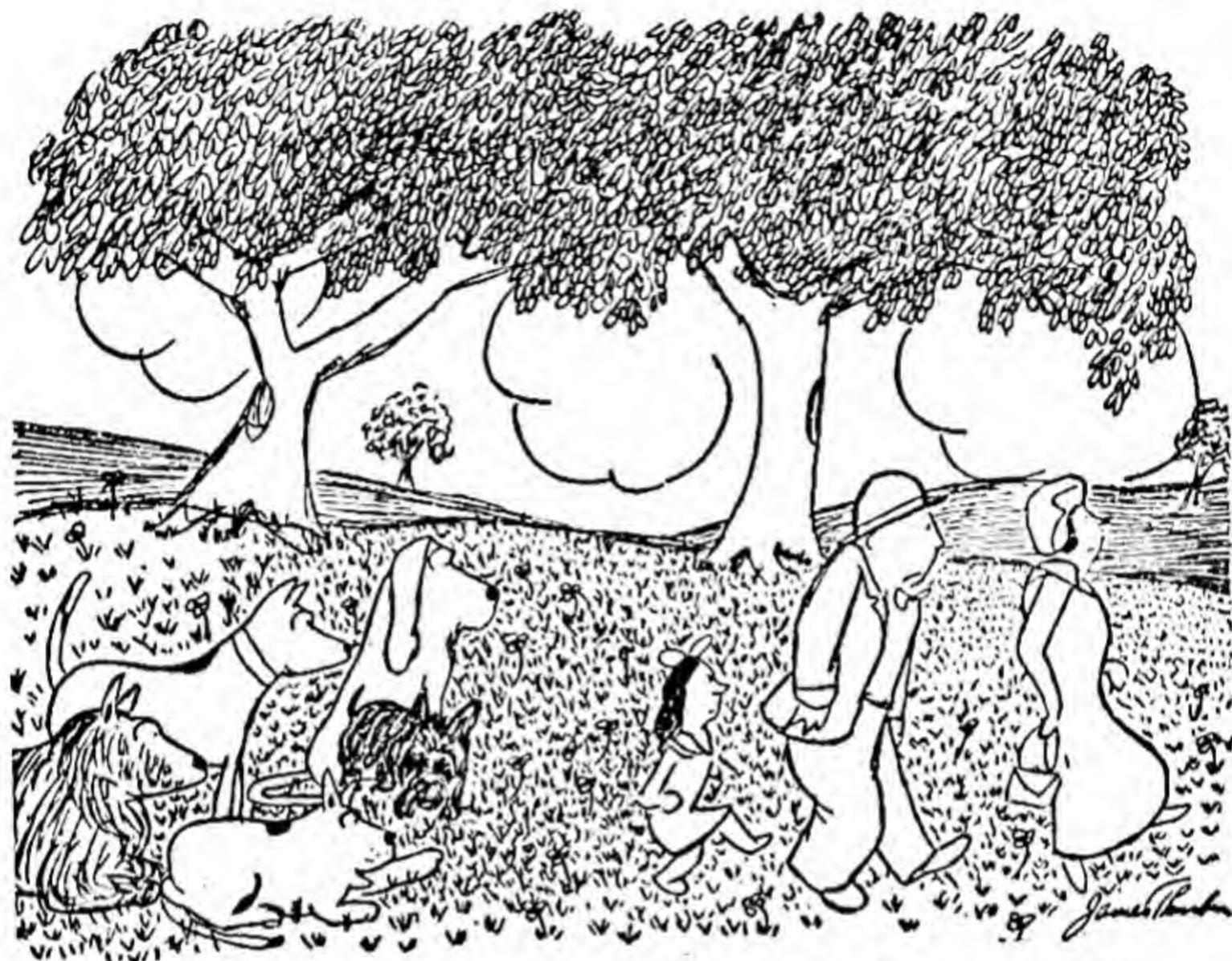


"TOBACCO ROAD"

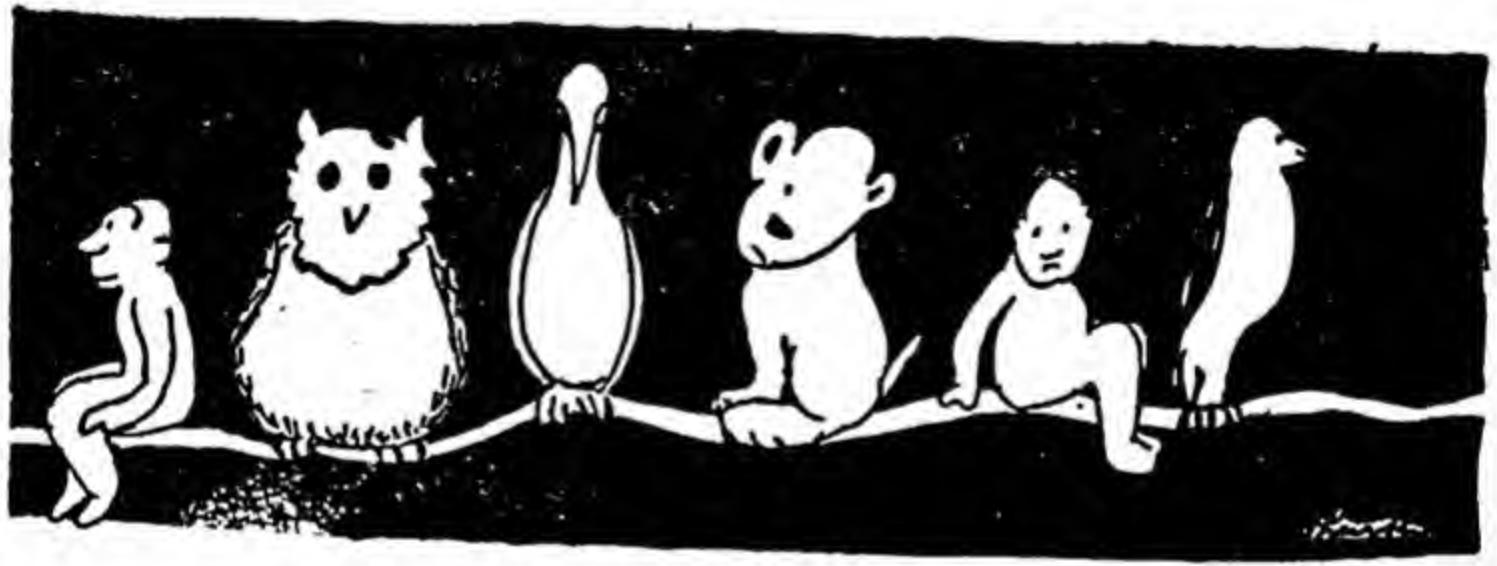
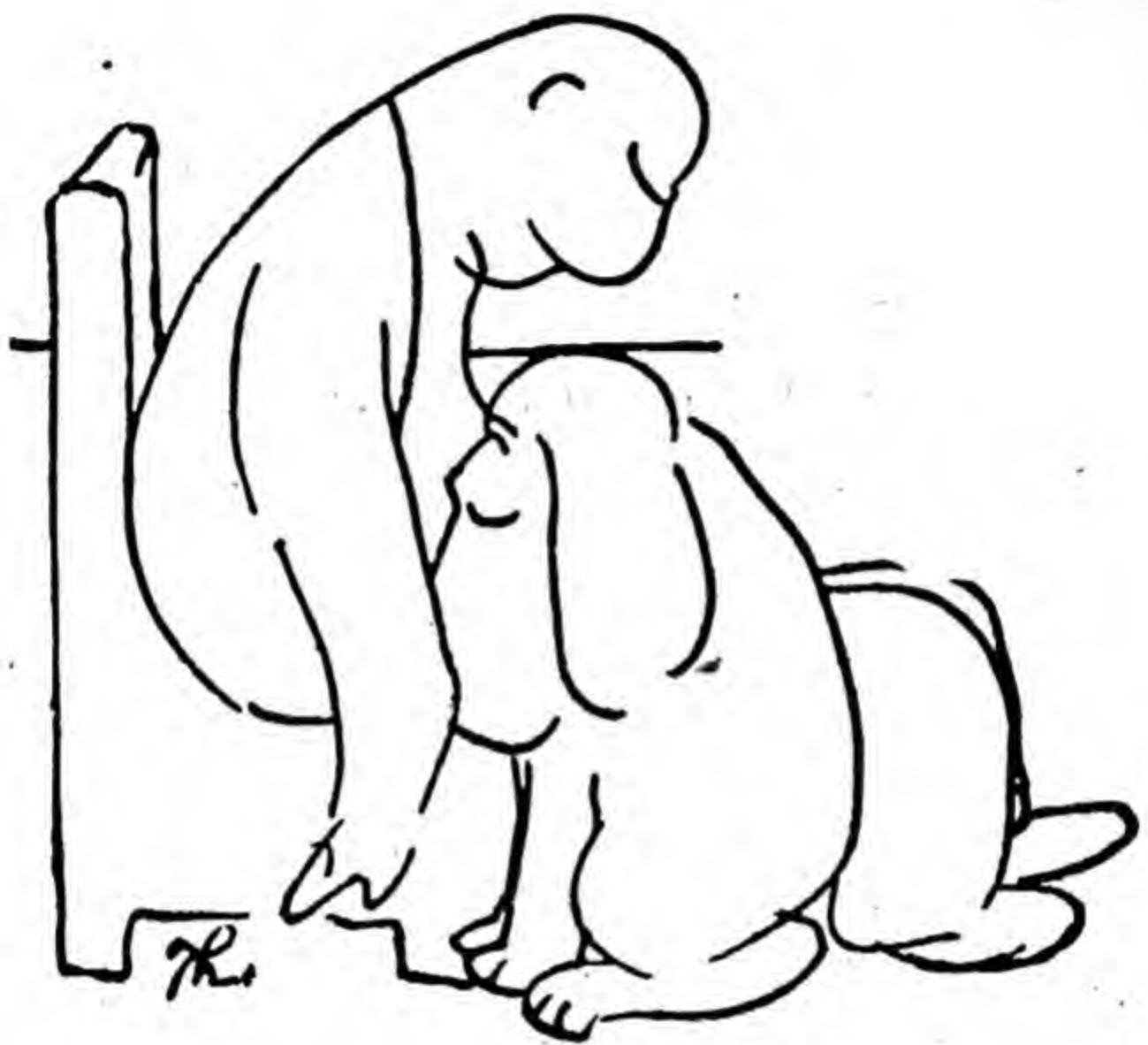
Sundown at the Lesters' house in the grotesquely humorous play at the Forty-eighth Street Theatre, as felt rather than seen by our artist. The characters' souls, or what passes for them, rather than their outward likenesses, are presented here. The bundle of rags on the horizon is Grandma Lester, if not really Patricia Quinn, who plays the part. The other symbols, from right to left, are Margaret Wycherly, Henry Hull, Dean Jagger, Sam Byrd, Reneice Rehan, and Ruth Hunter.



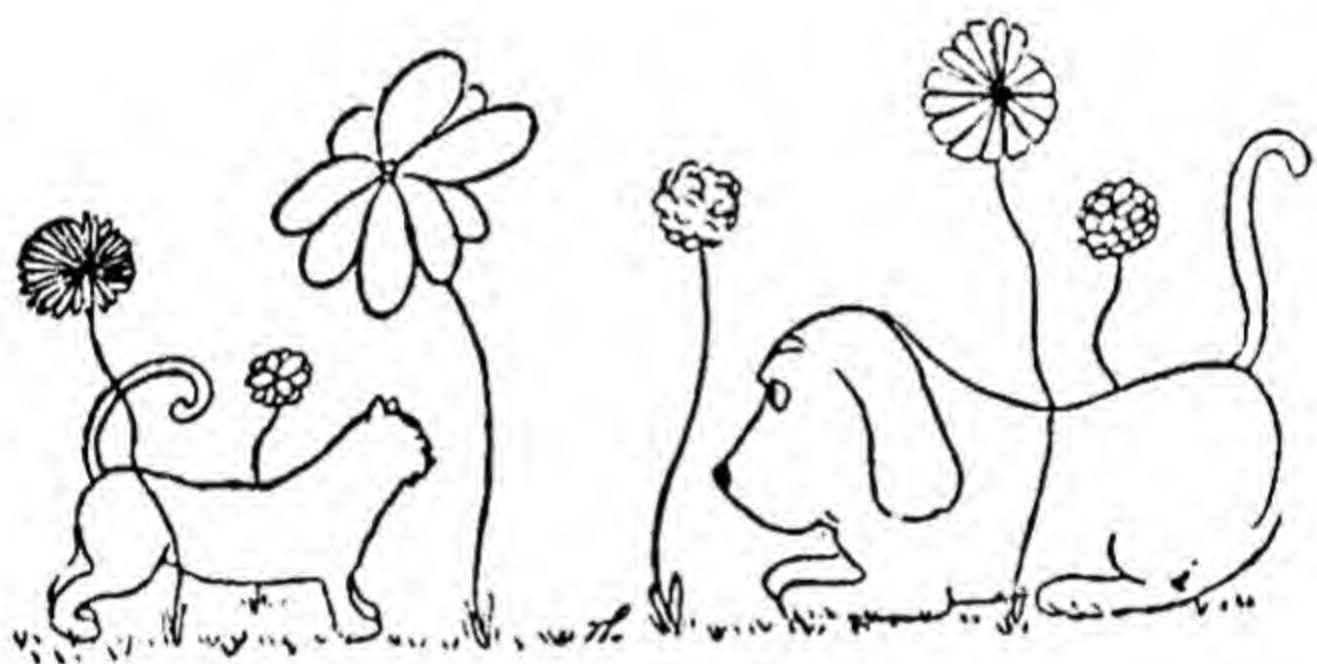


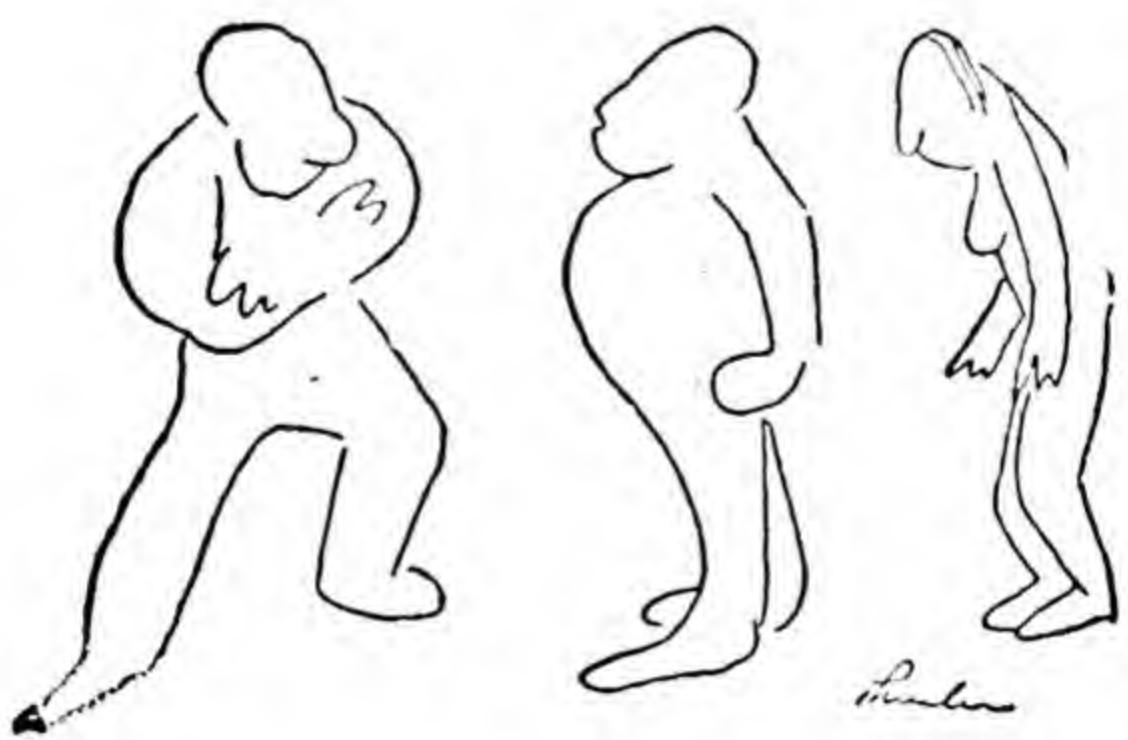


"There go the most intelligent of all animals."



The Masculine Approach



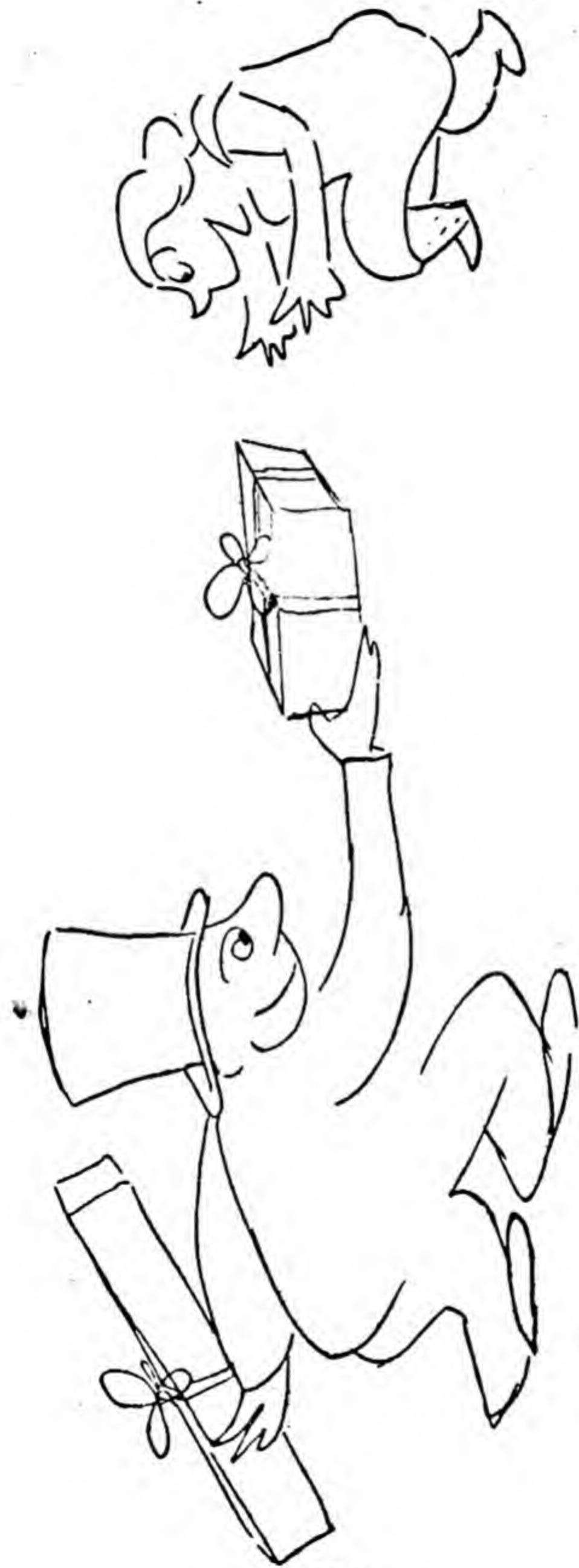


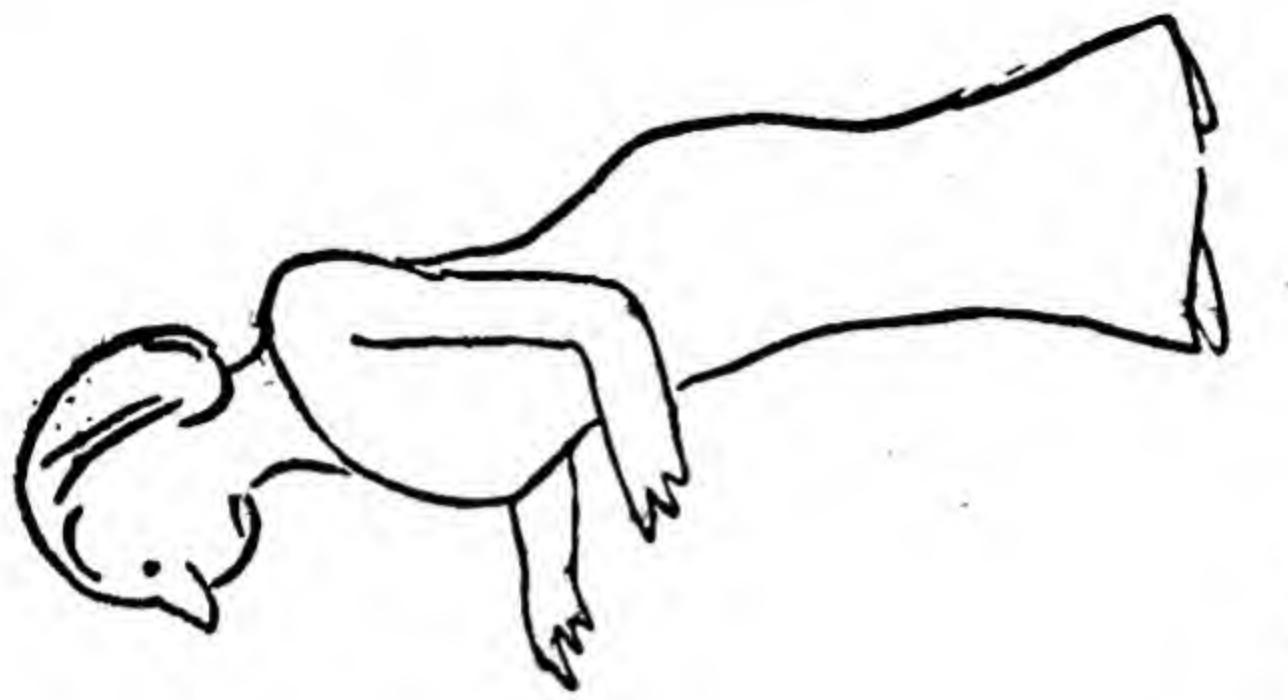
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The Let-'Em-Wait-and-Wonder Plan

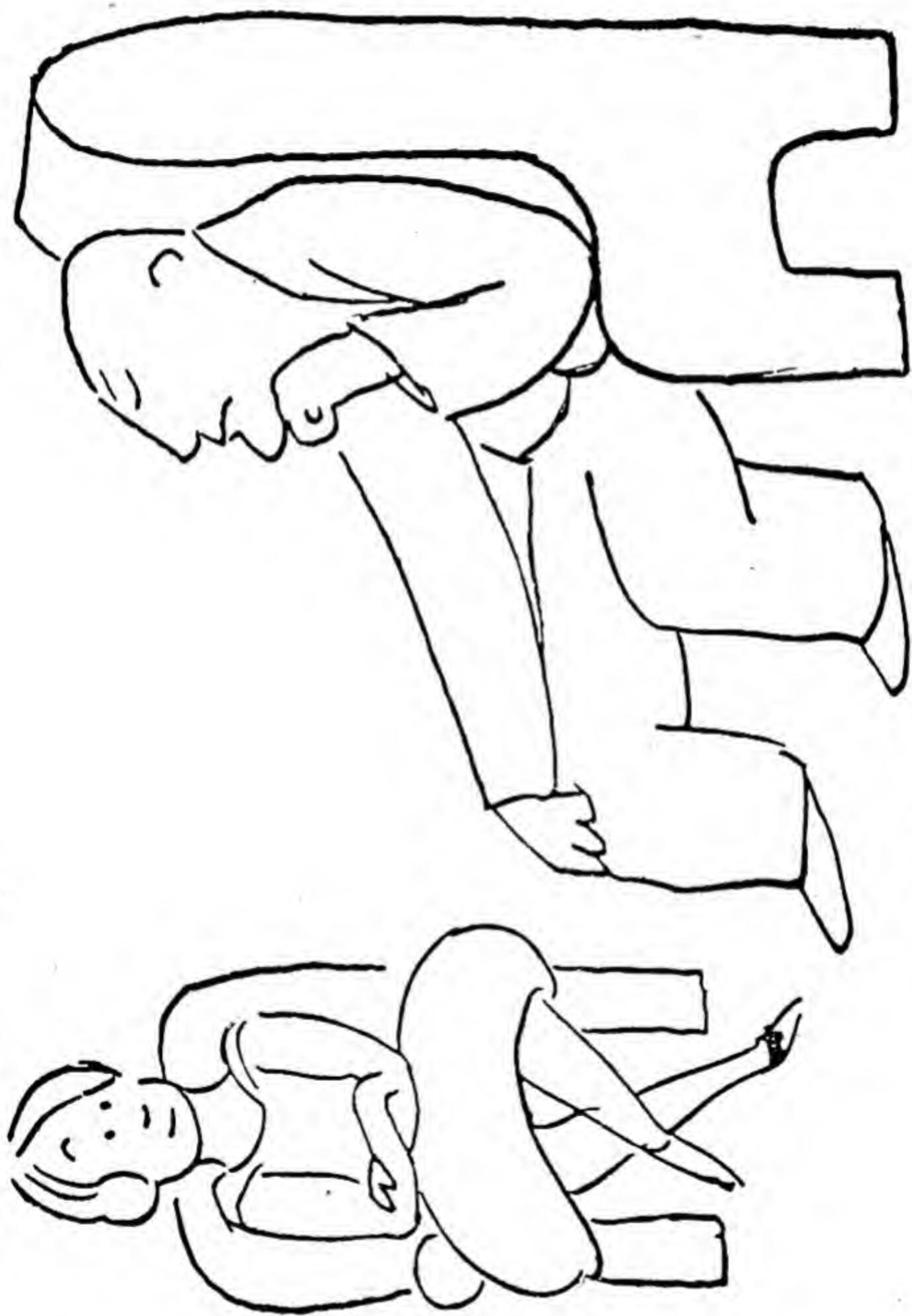
The Candy-and-Flower Campaign



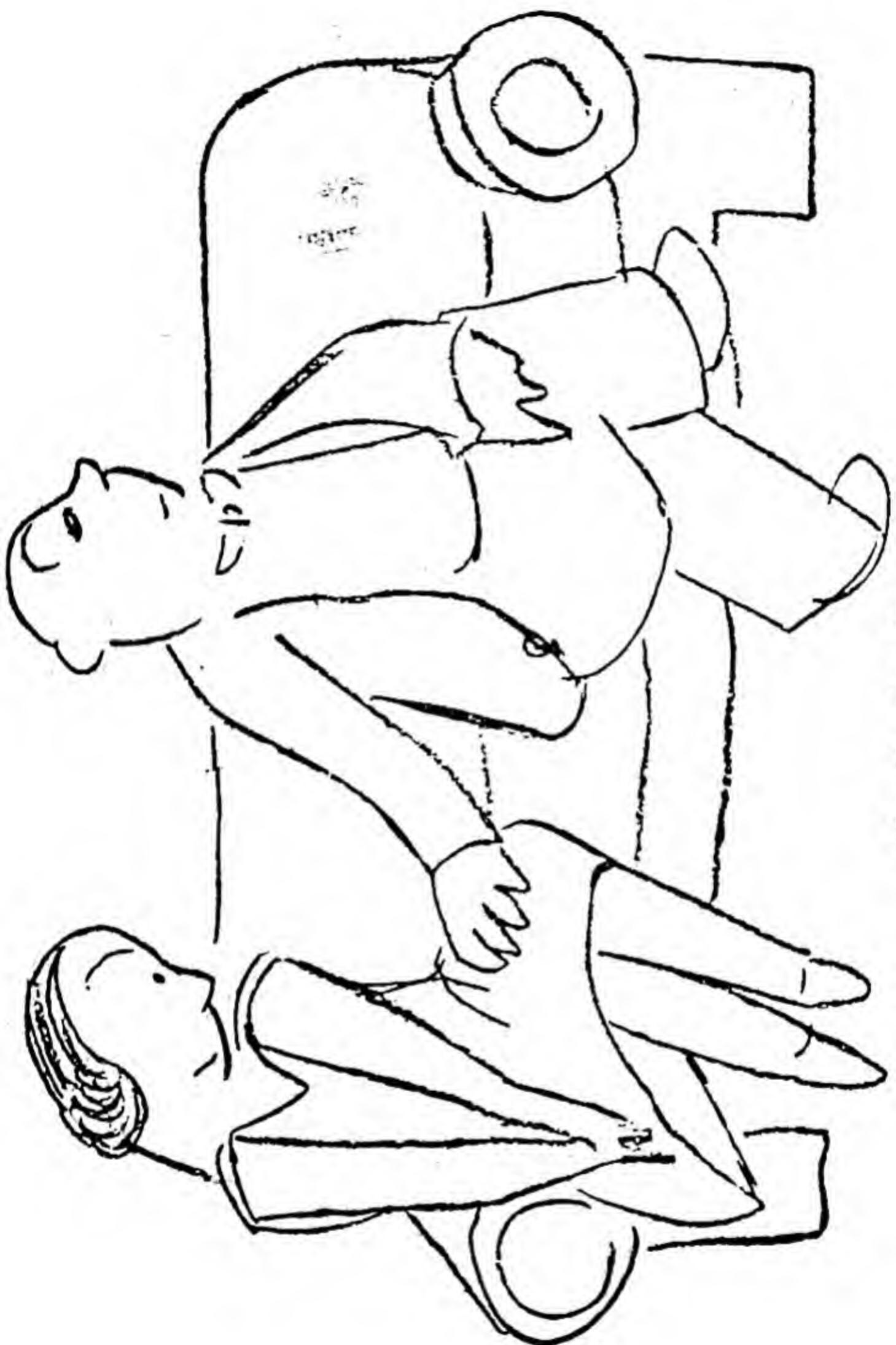


The I'm-Drinking-Myself-to-Death-and-Nobody-Can-
Stop-Me Method

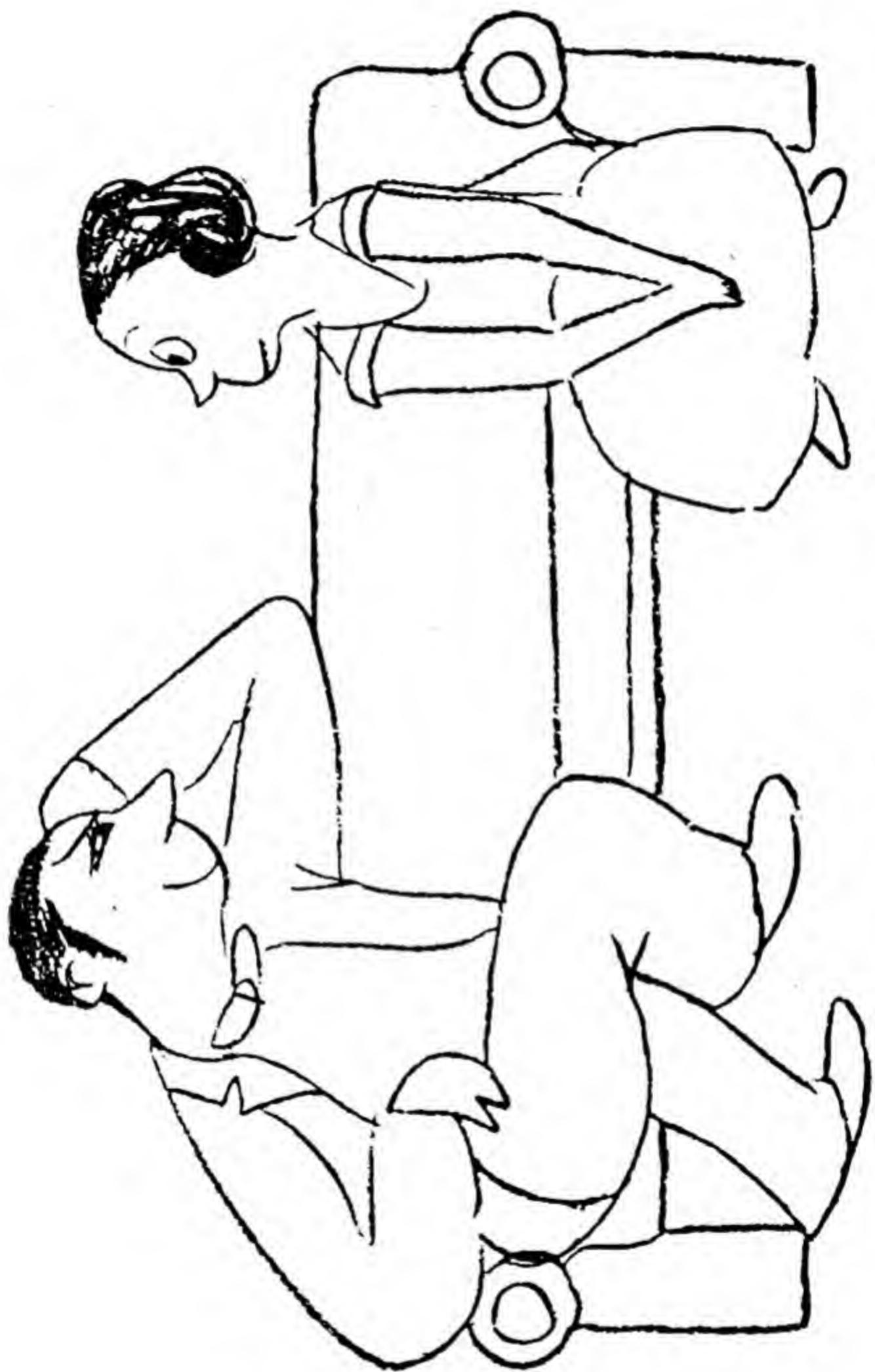
The Strong, Silent System



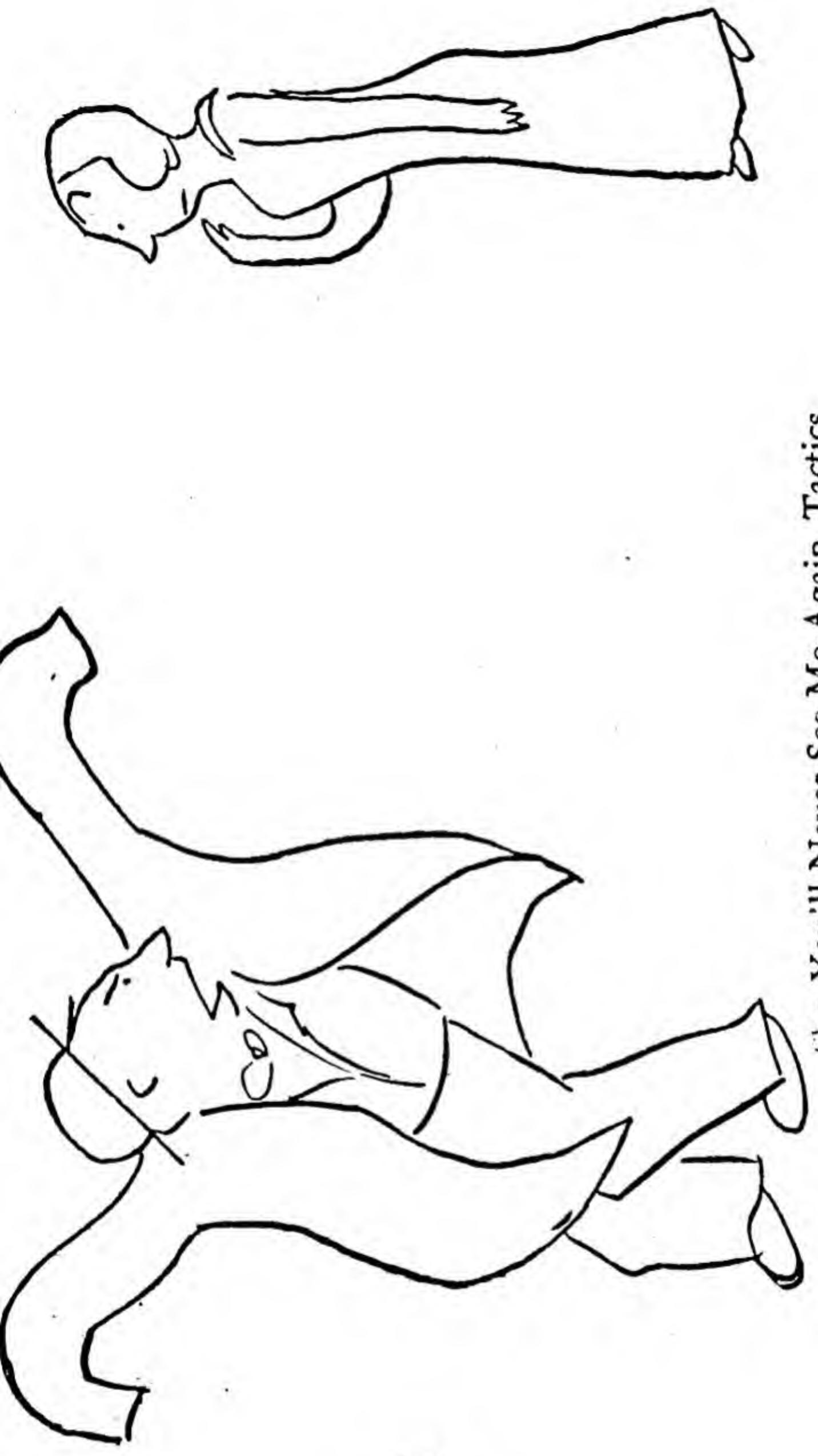
The Pawing System



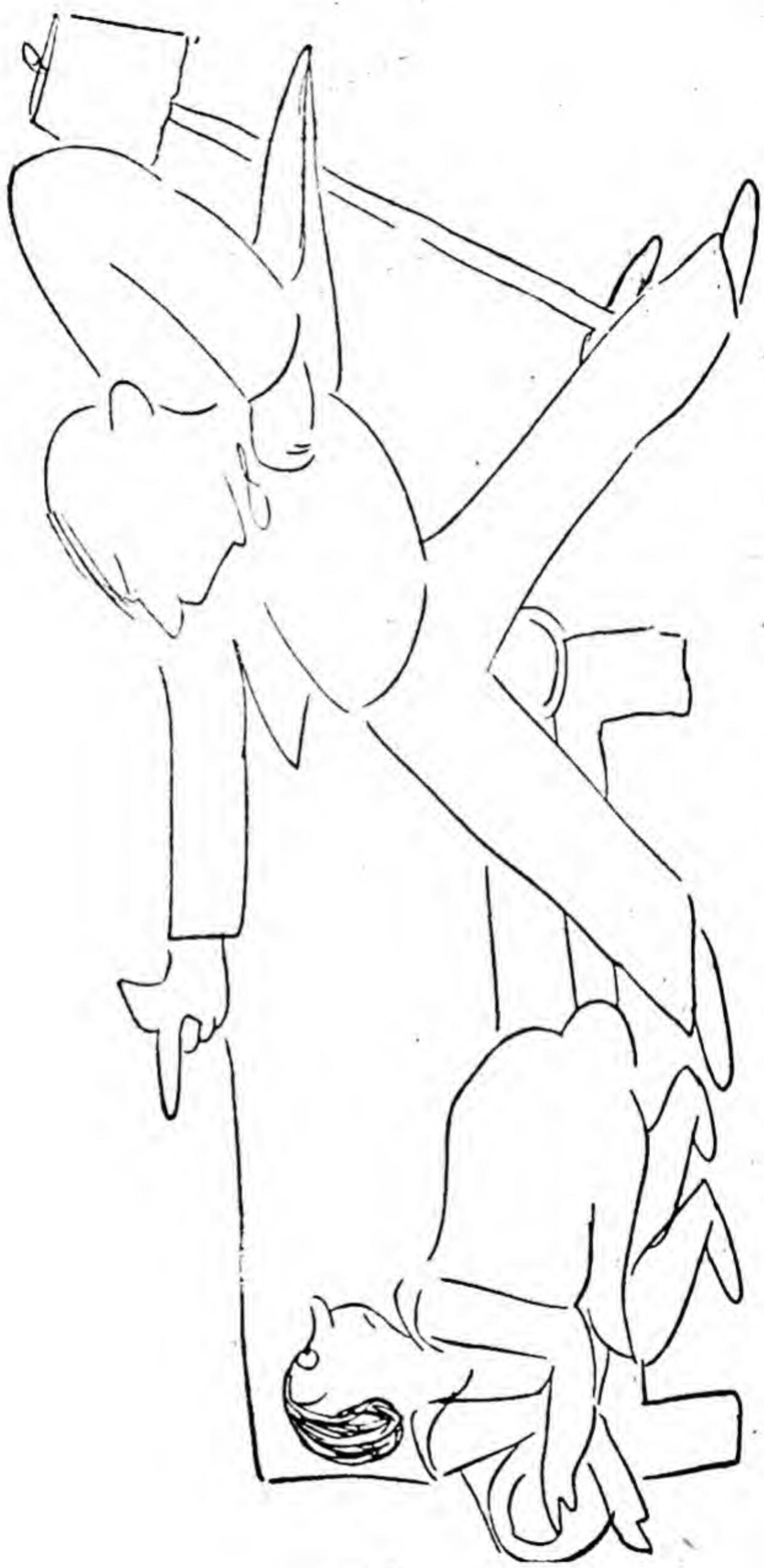
The Strange-Fascination Technique



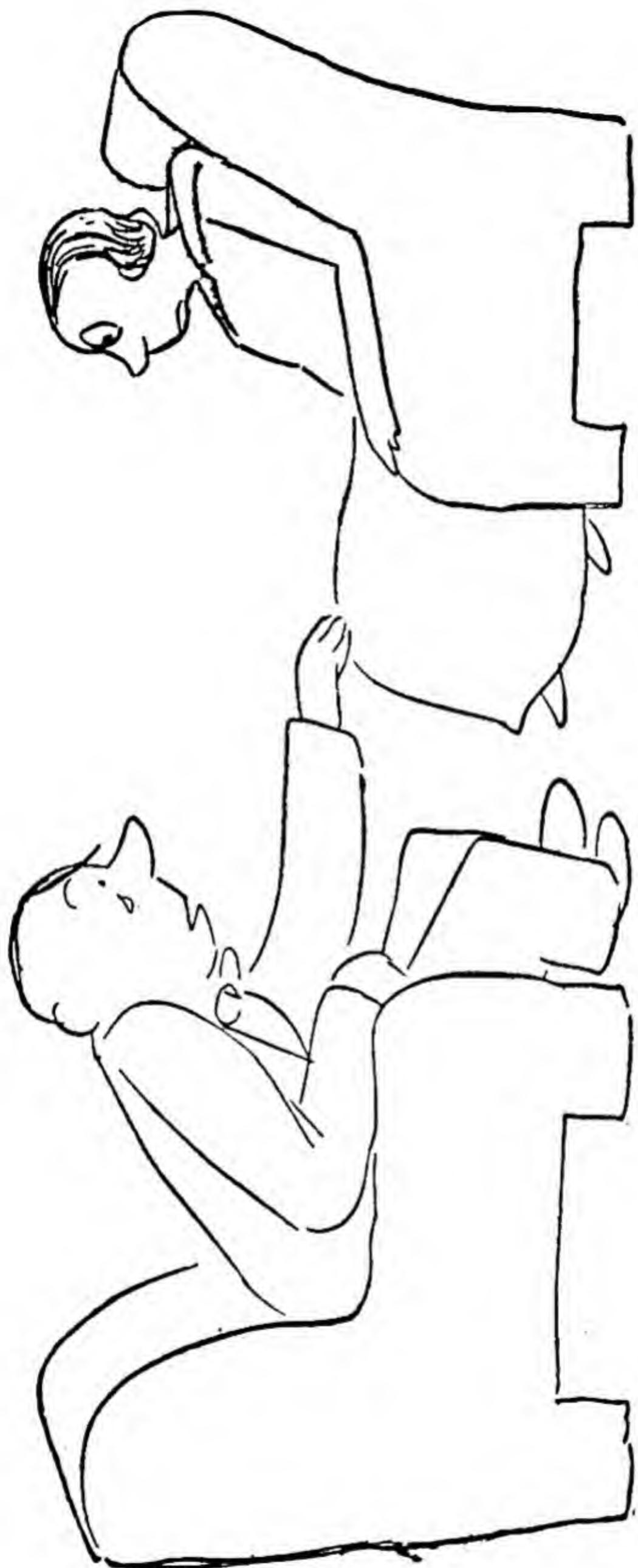
The You'll-Never-See-Me-Again Tactics

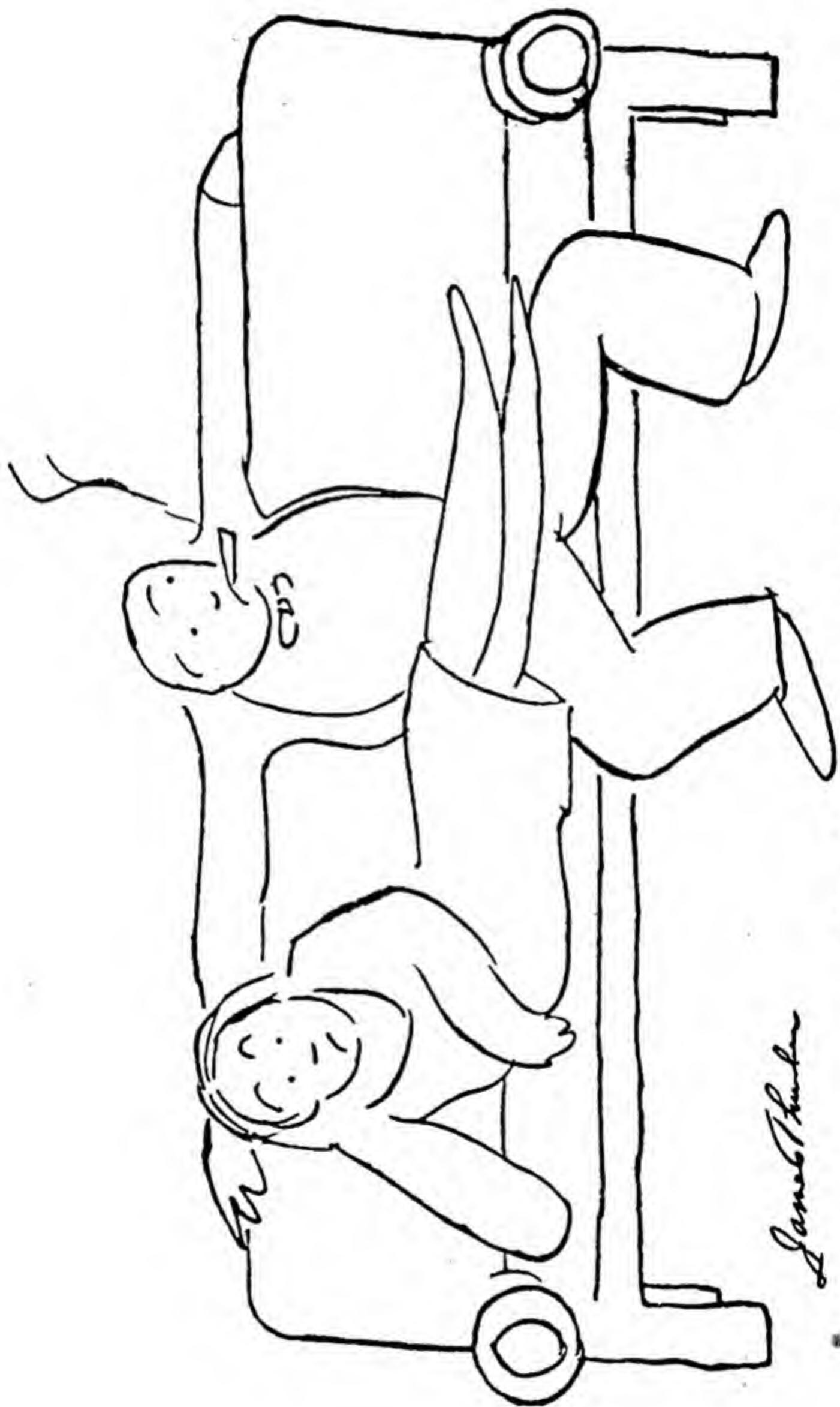


The Heroic, or Dangers-I-Have-Known, Method



The Unhappy-Childhood Story

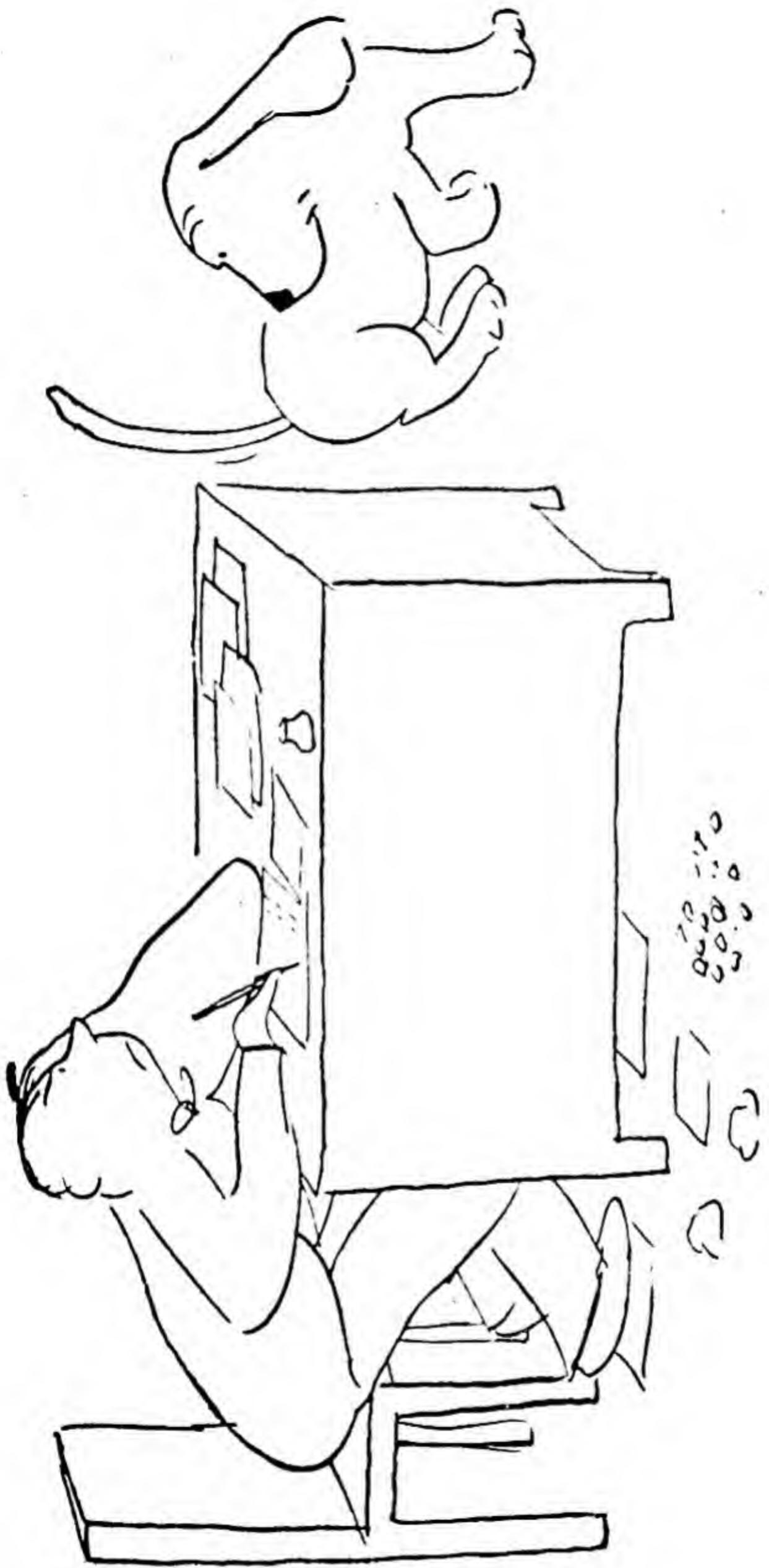




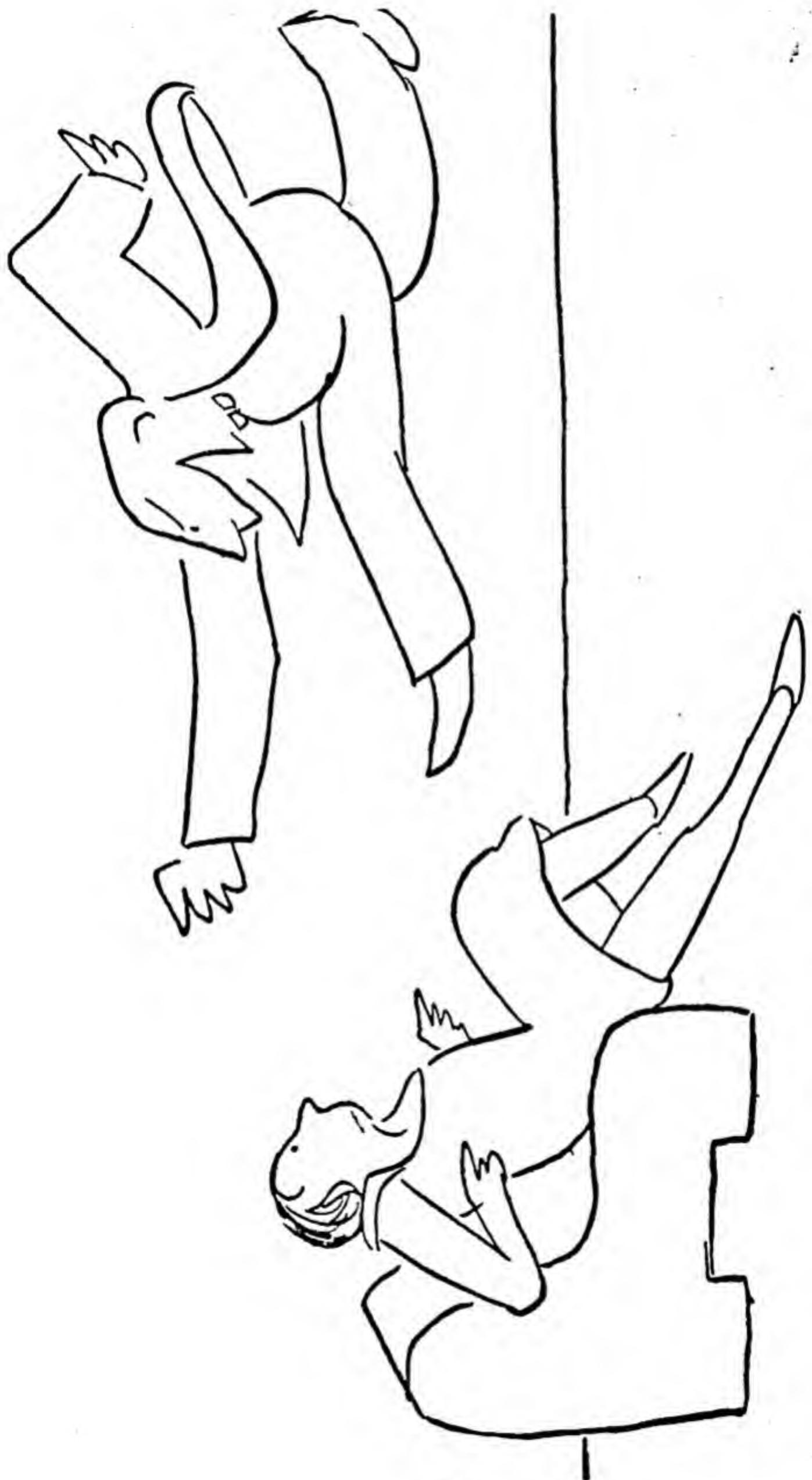
The Indifference Attitude

Daniel Johnston

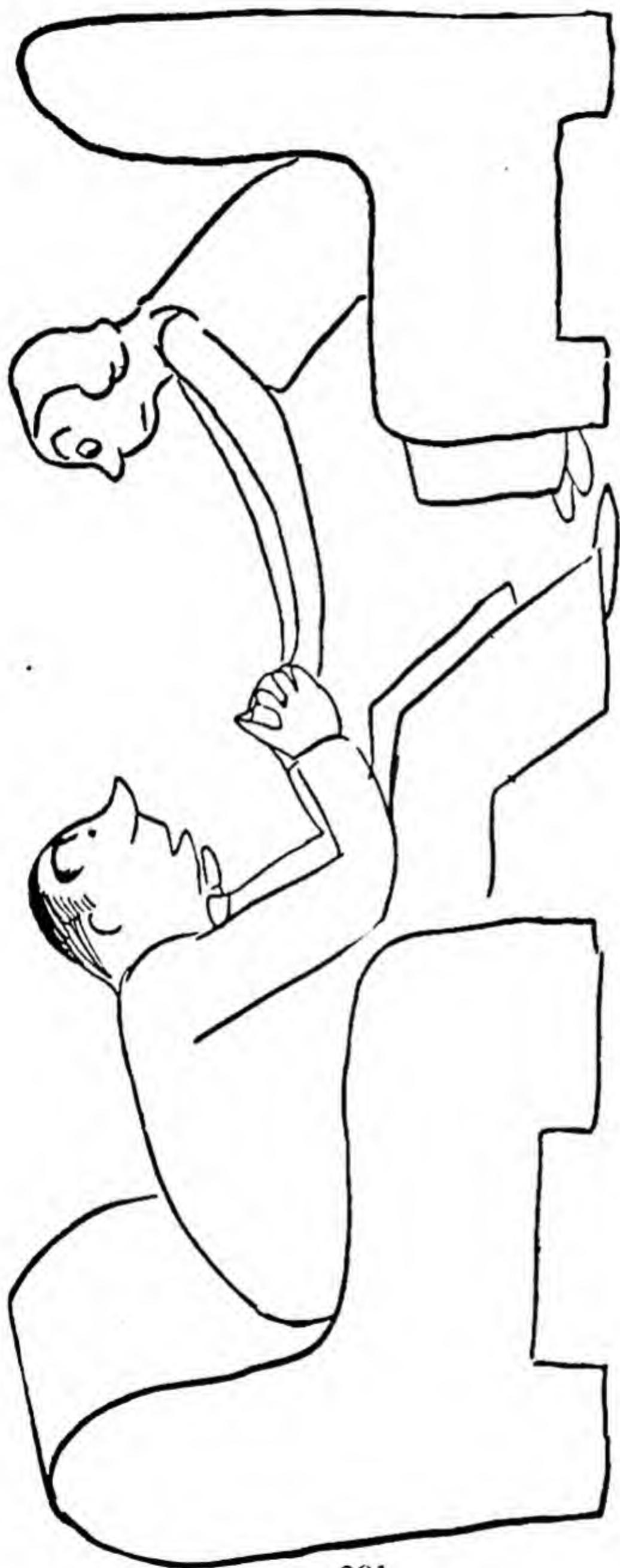
The Letter-Writing Method



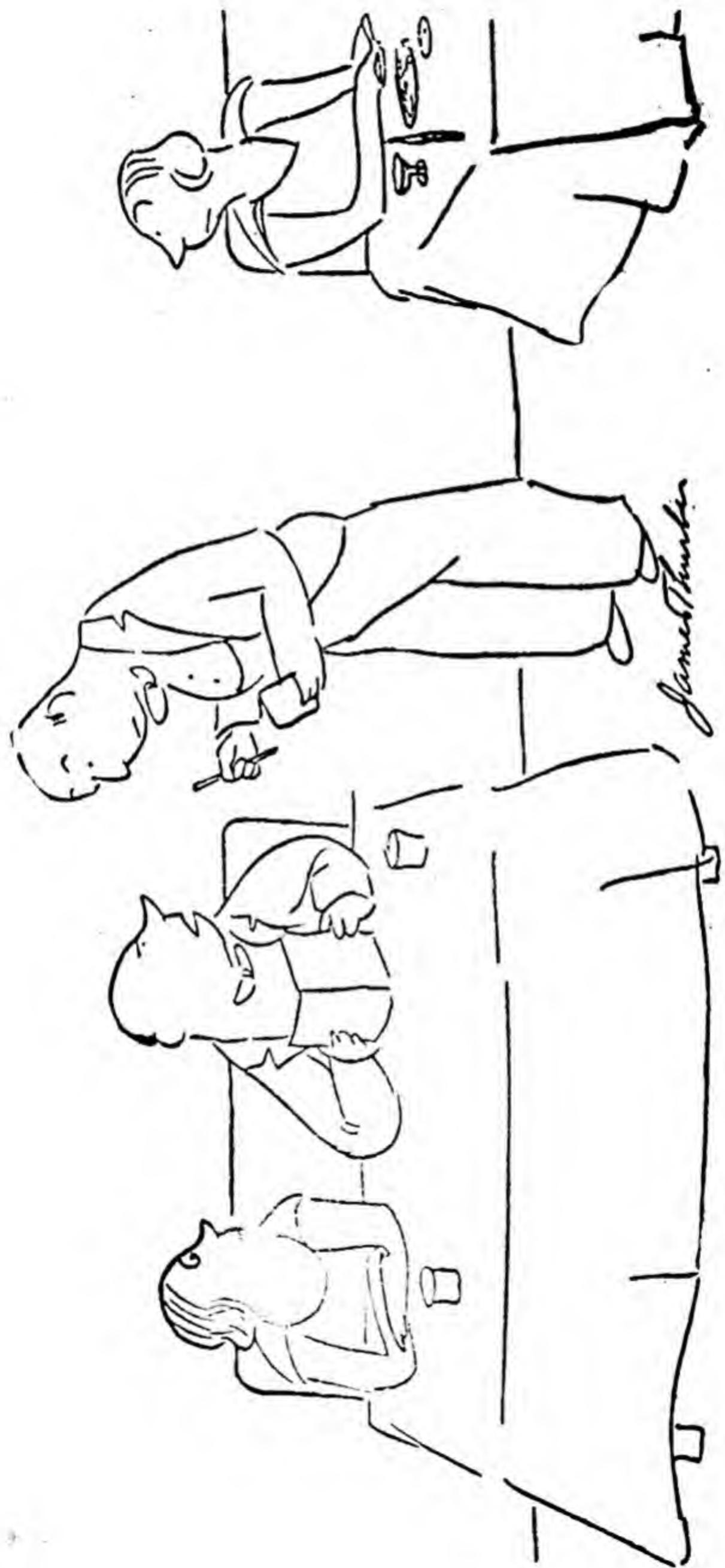
The Sweep-'Em-Off-Their-Feet Method



The Her-Two-Little-Hands-in-His-Huge-Ones Pass

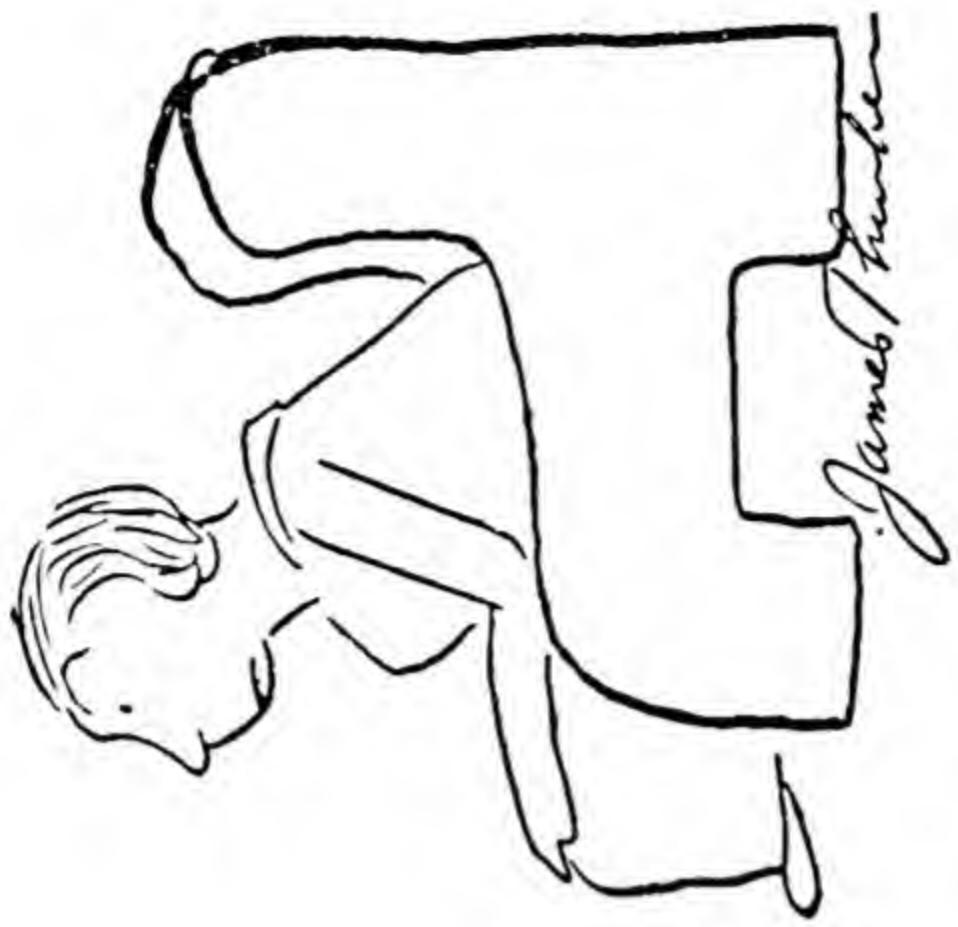


The Man-of-the-World, or Ordering-in-French Maneuver



The Continental-Manners Technique

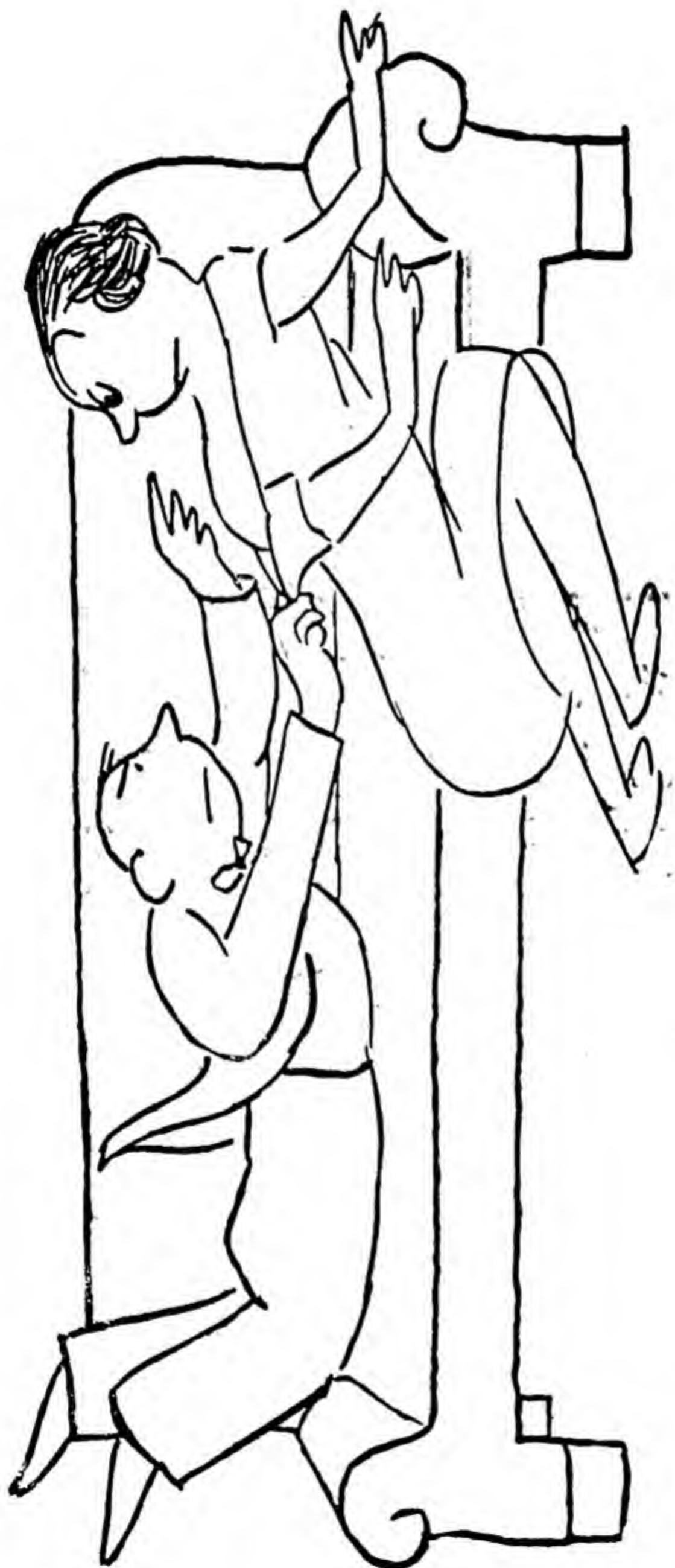




The I'm-Not-Good-Enough-for-You Announcement

The Just-a-Little-Boy System



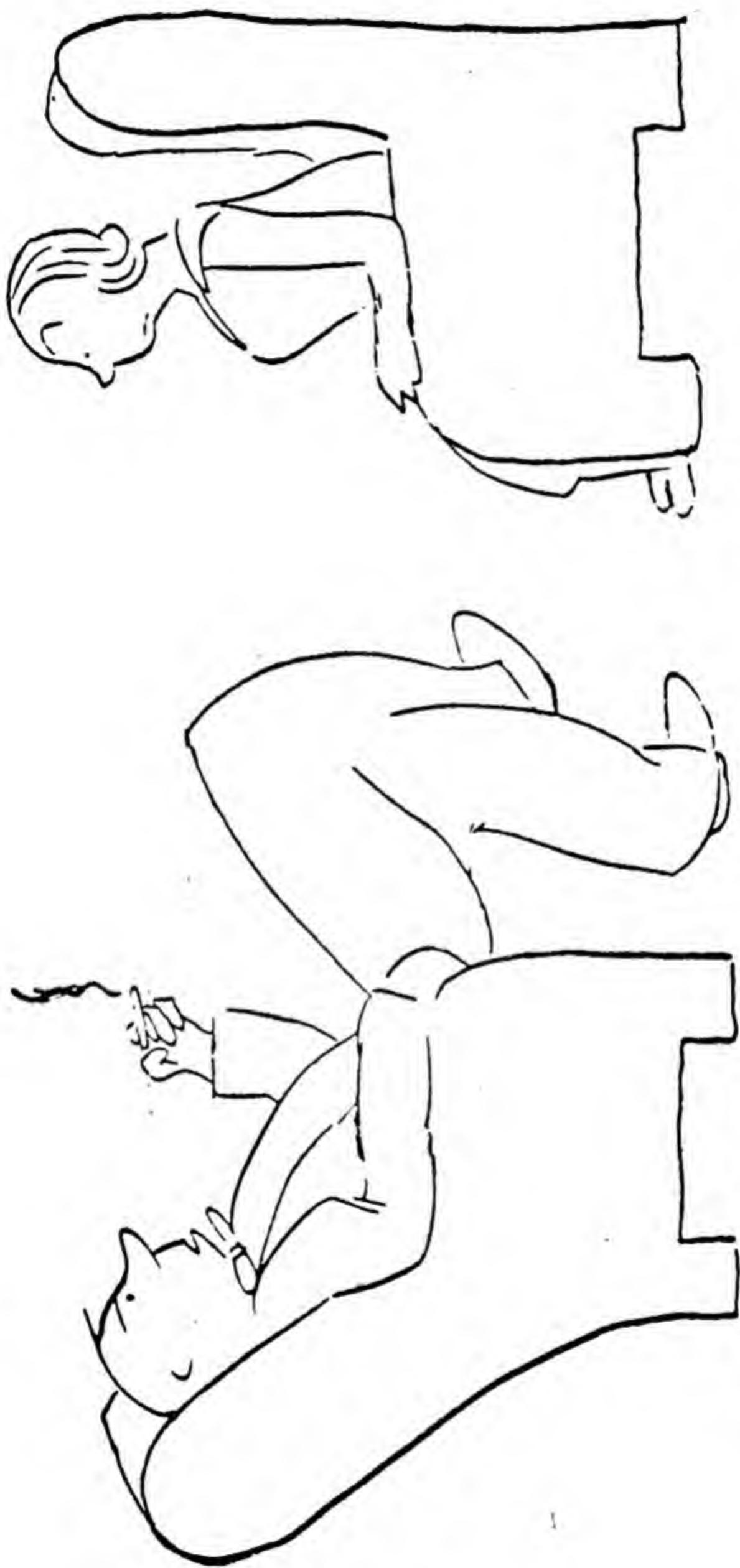


The Sudden Onslaught



The Harpo Marx Attack

The I-May-Go-Away-for-a-Year-or-Two Move



First Aid





Janet Baker



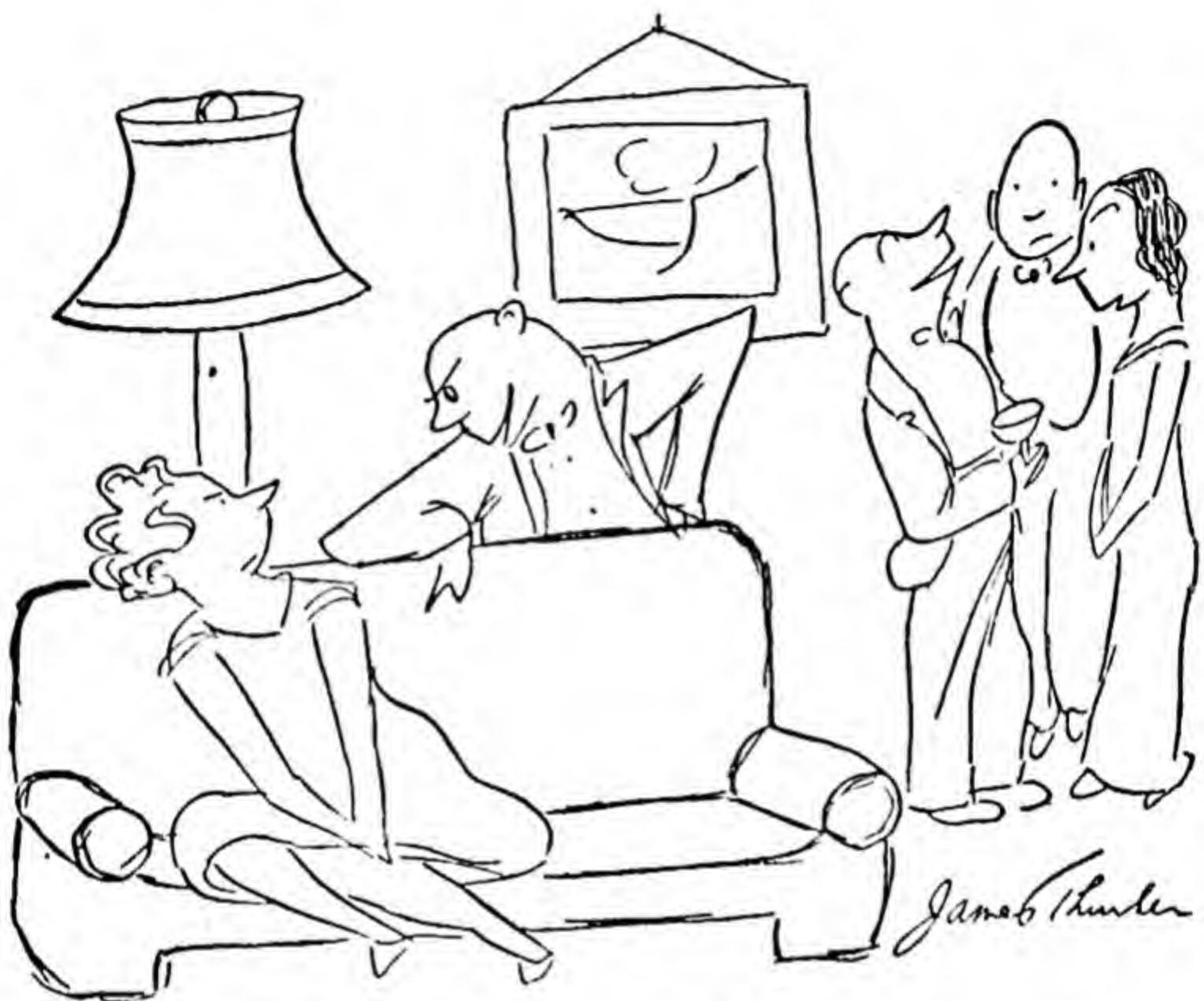
"In first-aid class today we learned eleven different ways to poison people."



"Well, you're not going to try the fireman's lift on me!"



"I think he's stopped breathing. What do I do now?"



"How's about going somewhere and trying traction splints
on each other, Miss Bryson?"

The War Between Men and Women





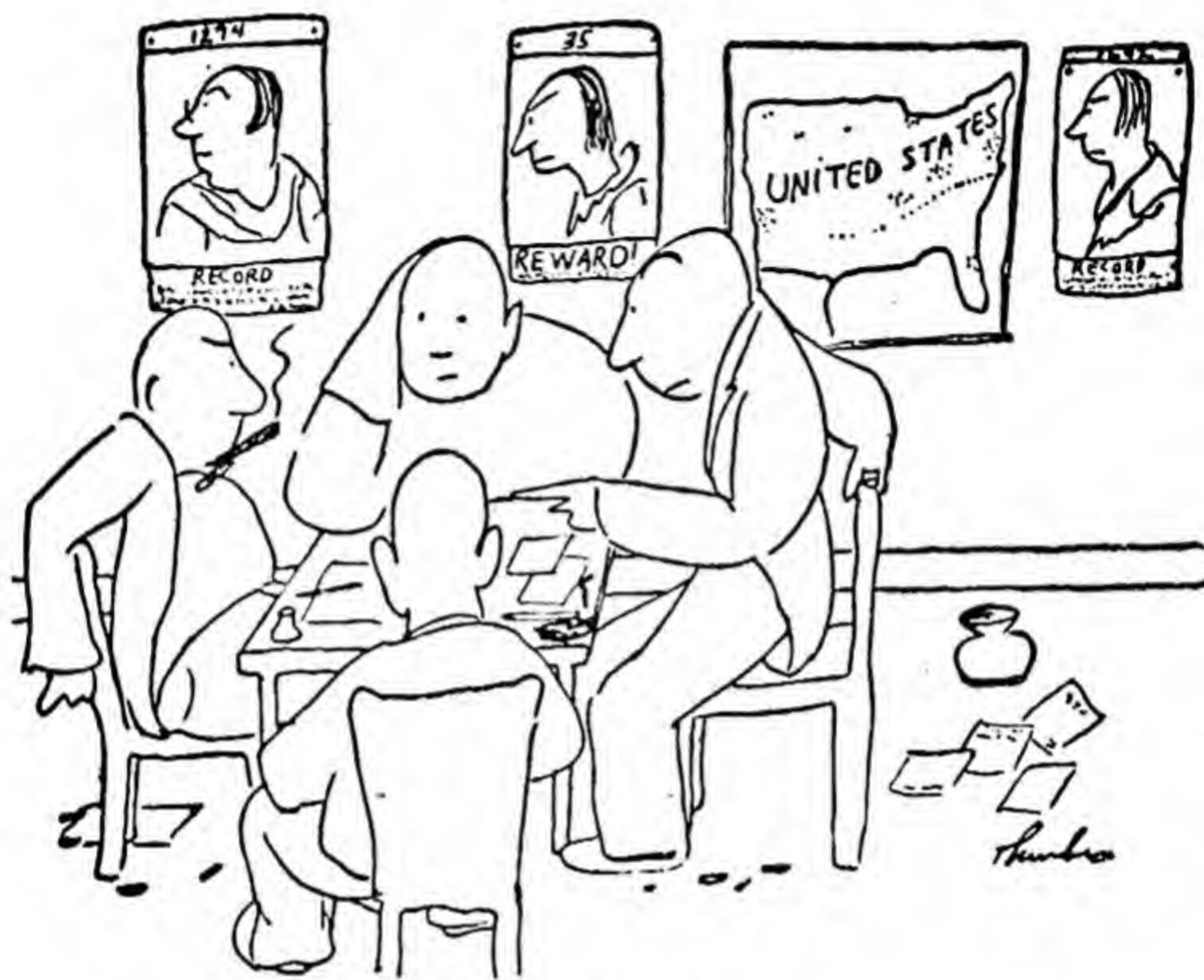
The Overt Act



The Battle on the Stairs



The Fight in the Grocery



Men's G.H.Q.



Women's G.H.Q.



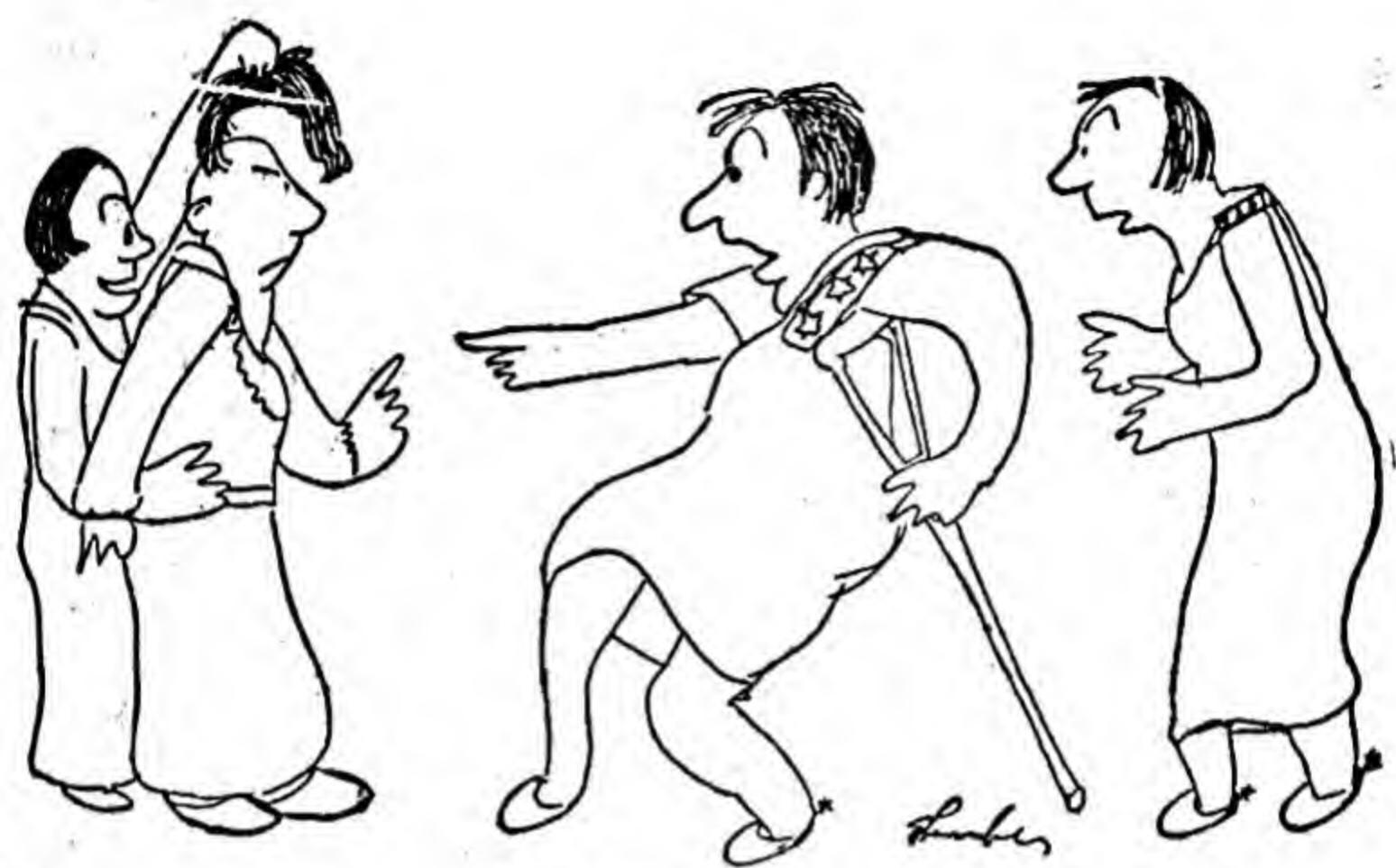
Capture of Three Physics Professors



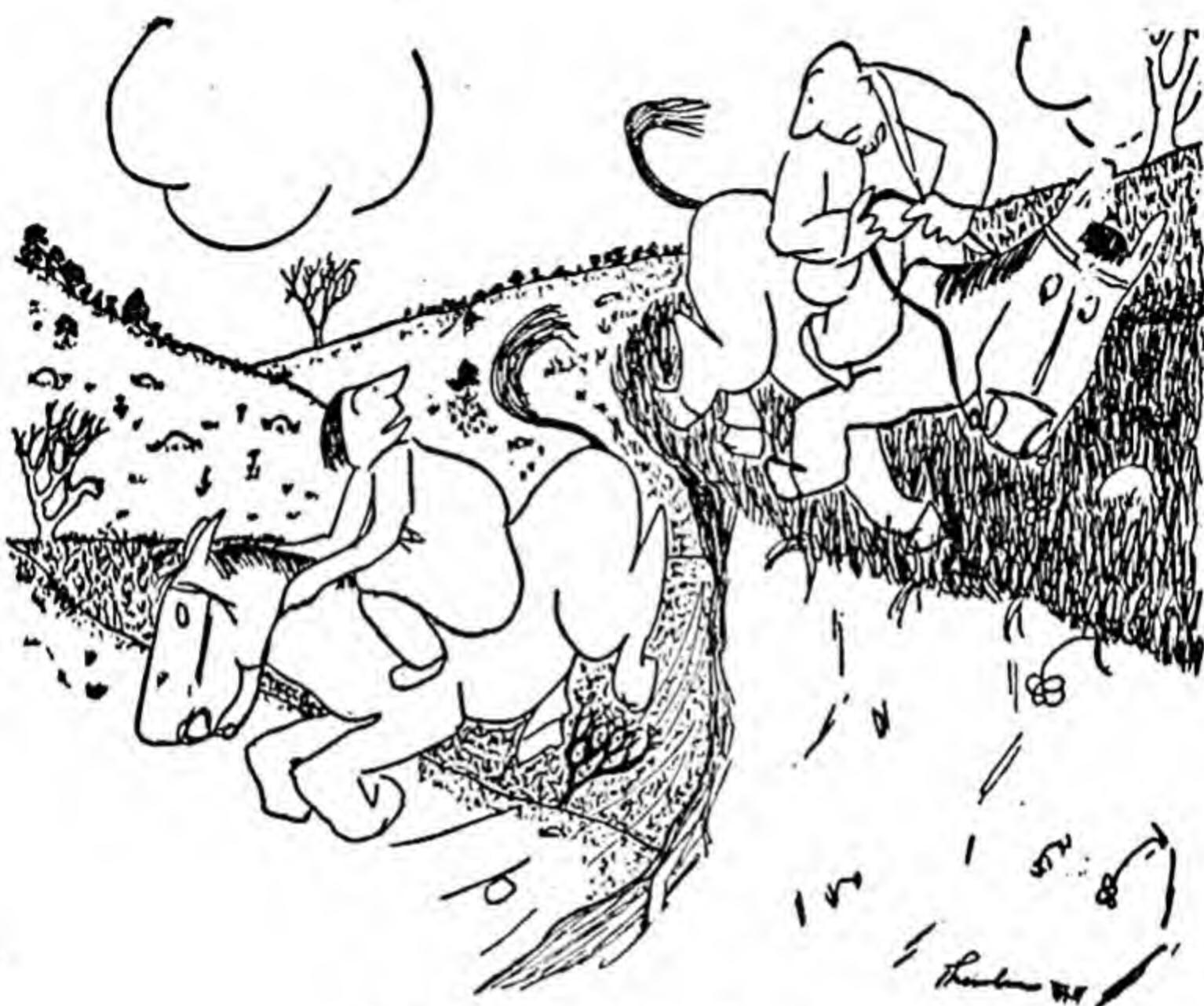
Surrender of Three Blondes



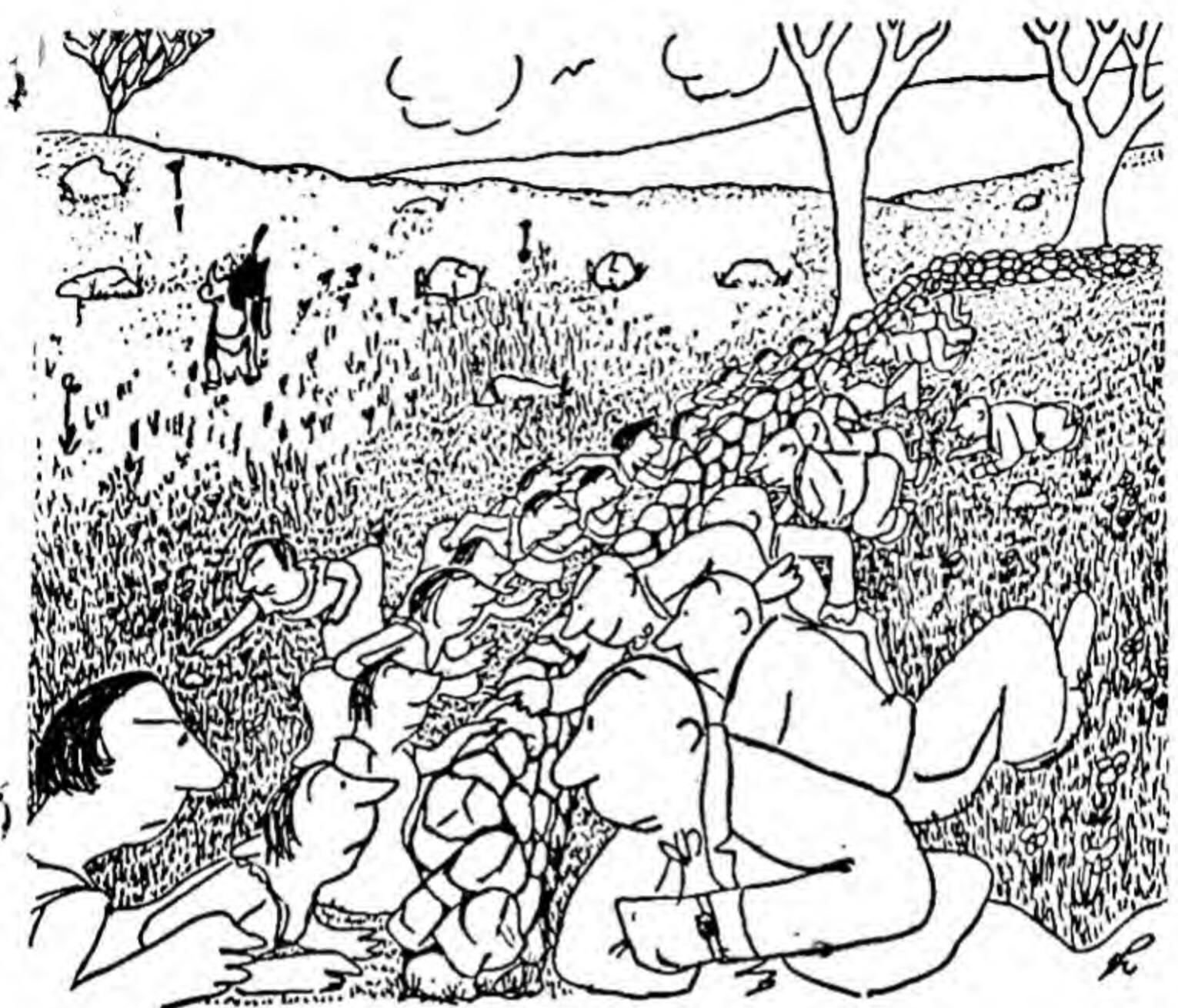
The Battle of Labrador



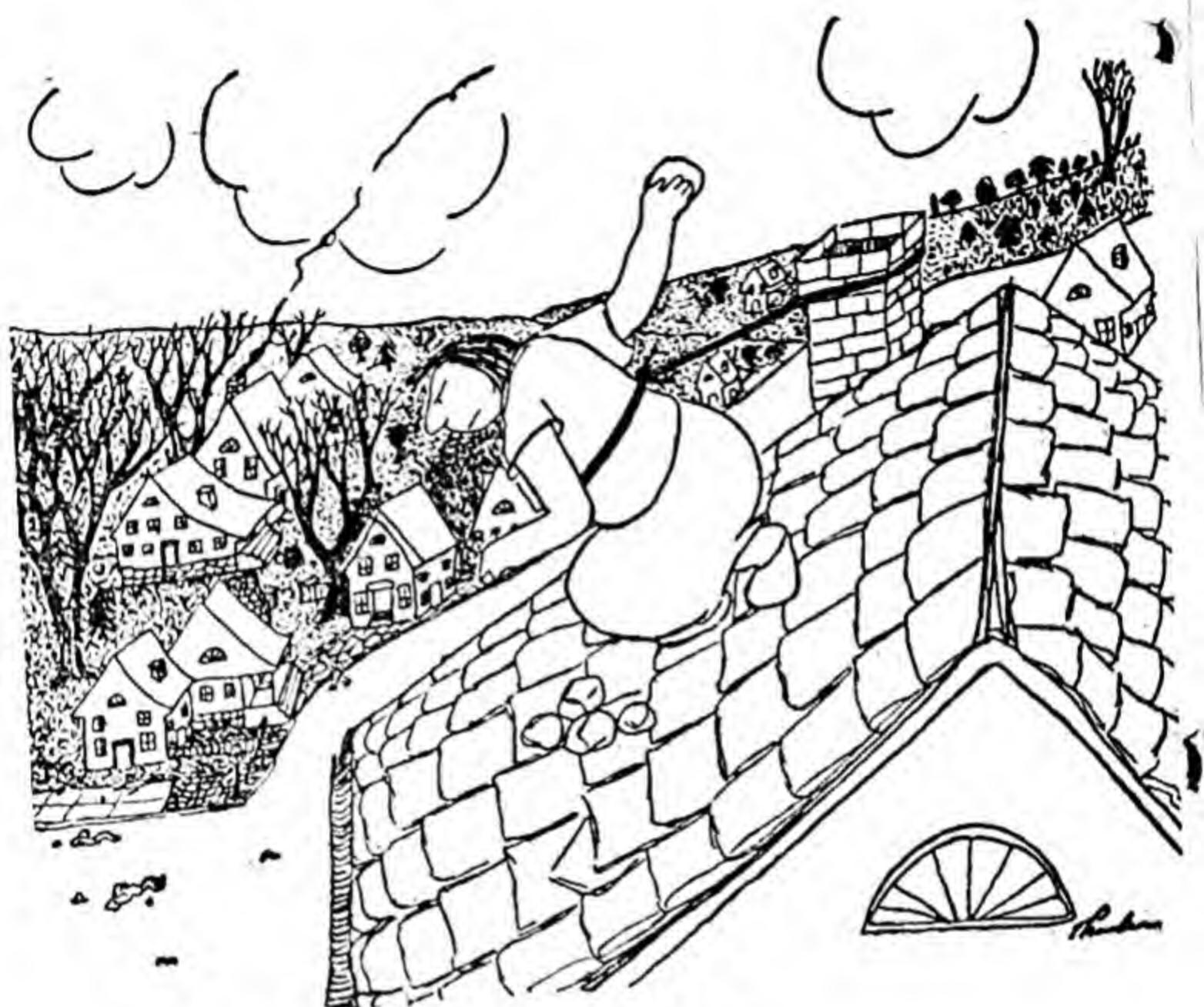
The Spy



Mrs. Pritchard's Leap



Zero Hour—Connecticut



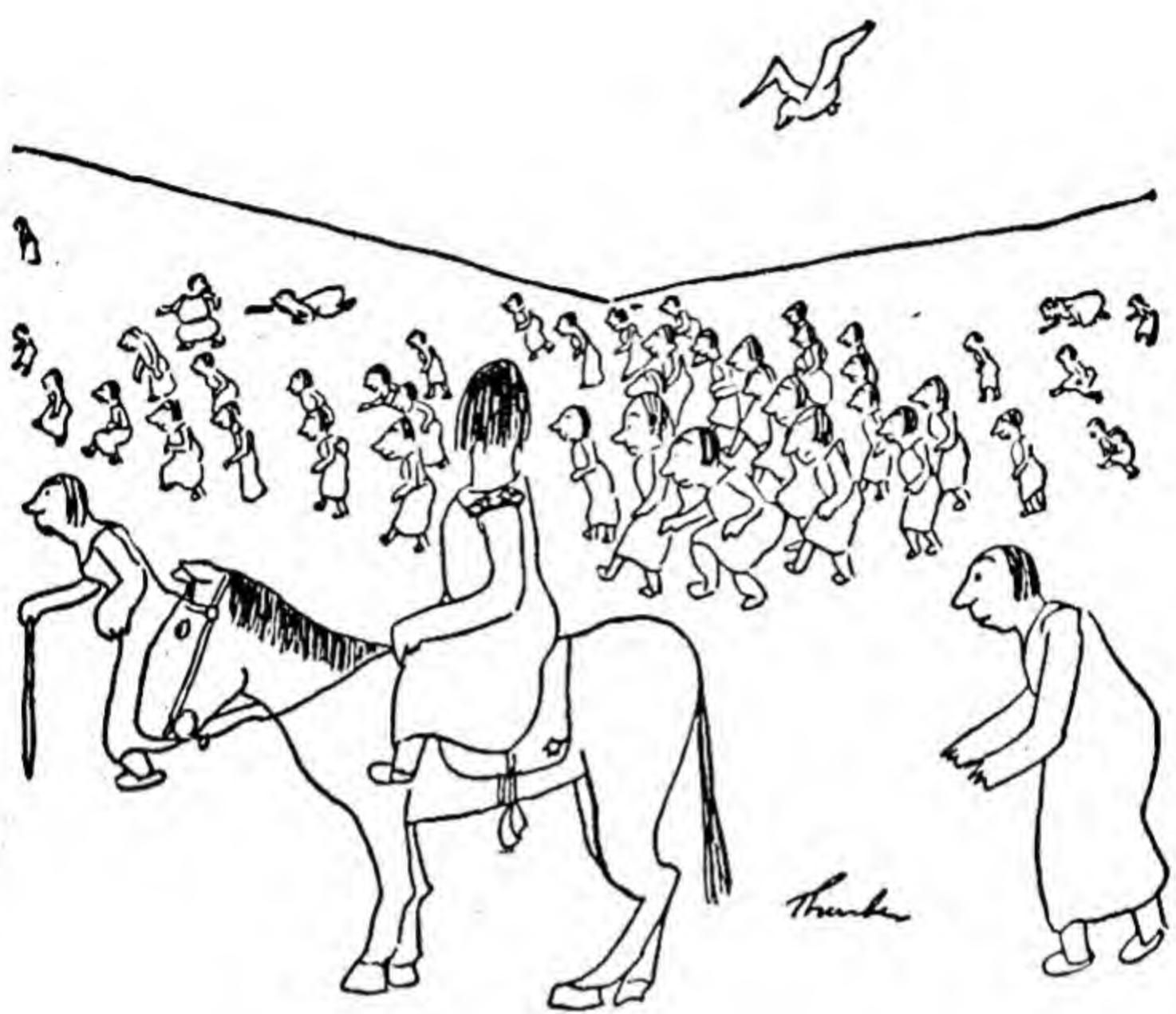
The Sniper



Parley



Gettysburg



Retreat



Rout



Surrender



Hanlon



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